

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DISCOVERING LEADERSHIP MODELS THAT PRODUCE FRUIT
WITHIN THE MID-ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT OF THE
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

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In Memory of Lois T. Johnson, Mable L. Counts, Shelia Robinson and Dorothy
Davis-Stewart

EPIGRAPH

Prophetic, purposeful, visionary leadership by courageous, compassionate, convicted leaders can grow and sustain congregations that reflect the rich diversity of God's reign.

Jacqueline J. Lewis

APPROVAL PAGE

Accepted by the faculty and the final demonstration examining committee of Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Ministry degree.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to discover leadership models that would produce fruit within the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church. The scope of research included biblical, theological, historical, and contemporary writings on fruitful leadership. The design of the project included both clergy and lay leaders within the Mid-Atlantic District.

Noteworthy to this project, from the data, participants understood their role as a leader while contributing to church growth, community engagement, mentorship, and a Kingdom model through a Spirit-led approach. The results revealed that leadership is beyond the title “leader” but it should be embodied in practice.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

Growing up, I remember this church a very urban but family-oriented church that was thriving from my observation. I remember how the church was filled to capacity every Sunday. The church had an amazing music ministry that represented five different choirs who served on different Sundays and a band that would fill the church with passionate praise. This particular church was a ministry where multiple generations were engaged all at the same time.

The children and youth met with youth leaders consistently while being catechized. Young adults had many worship, discipleship, and fellowship opportunities. The middle-aged adults were active and a strong force within the church body. The seniors were engaged in the ministries of the church as well. Overall, this church was a very supportive environment filled with love.

Over the years, one of the pastors had a moral failure. This caused the church to start dwindling. Congregants did not trust the pastor anymore so the overall morale of our church was impacted. As a result, that pastor moved onto a different ministry assignment and the church went through a transitional period while the morale of the church continued to decline.

Within months, the bishop appointed a new pastor who had just graduated from seminary. He was very energetic and had a vision for the church. Congregants started to return to the church and the spirit of the church was revived. The new pastor began to make meaningful changes and was an extraordinary teacher. His intentions were very pure and he was invested.

Throughout this new season for the church, some of the members did not support the new vision and did not respond to this pastor's leadership so those persons decided to join other congregations.

As time went on under this pastor, the roof of the church caved in which forced the church to worship in a temporary location. Even though the church was in the wilderness, there was a renewed spirit and the pastor's theology began to deepen. When it was time to purchase the new property in the suburbs, the pastor's focus began to shift. The architecture and the renovation reflected what he wanted without a meaningful partnership with the congregation who sowed into the vision. The building became an idol and authentic ministry became obsolete.

As a result, attendance by younger generations started to decrease and middle-aged adults began searching once again for new congregations where their gifts and graces could be used to advance the Kingdom. The older generation remained because of their loyalty to the church. It must be noted that the building is beautiful and the land is well taken care of. The building has the latest technology but this building does not serve a thriving congregation anymore. Those five choirs have now dwindled to three people singing every Sunday morning. A plan to change leadership has not been executed at this time.

Observing how this church has transitioned from a thriving ministry to a declining ministry is heartbreaking and I attribute it primarily to leadership. The church described is not the only church experiencing this dilemma but many

churches have a similar story. Transformative leadership is lacking in so many areas which includes the Episcopal Area that I currently serve in. As noted, the congregation described is a small piece of a broader puzzle of ineffectiveness and fruitlessness. Therefore, I am passionate about leadership that will produce consistent fruit that will last within the context of the AME Zion Church, particularly in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District.

Purpose Statement and Research Question

The purpose of this project was to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The research question was: To what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church?

Overview

This project was intended to discover leadership models that contribute to church growth in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church context by assessing the perspectives of church leaders in the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church. The participants were surveyed using an online assessment tool to discover leadership models that impact growth and effectiveness. I assessed the results using a compilation tool. No face to face interviews were conducted.

This project was designed to discover factors that cultivate continuous growth for the twenty-first century church within the African Methodist context through effective leadership models. It was my intent that this discovery project

would provide some of the answers to the questions that clergy and lay leaders have been asking concerning how to keep the church vibrant and effective in a post-church culture when society does not deem the church to be a priority anymore. On any given Sunday, stadiums, shopping malls, and restaurant parking lots are full while the church parking lots are close to empty. I believed that this project would give us the answers to our questions from a leadership perspective that were needed to bring healing and liberation to the decline taking place in Christendom.

Foundations

Leadership is a pivotal component as it relates to church growth and development. I believe that fruitful ministry is dependent upon transformative leadership models. The foundation of the Church began with Jesus who was a transformative leader. Scripture records how the Church was established through transformative leaders such as Paul, Timothy, and Titus. Leadership is imperative when assessing and discovering the modalities that lead towards vibrancy within the Kingdom of God.

It is my firm belief that the Church will always stand, but decline is a reality in various periods of history and is occurring in today's western world. The culture of our society is changing very rapidly, and the Church must catch up to the change to ensure relevance as well as progress. Transformative leadership is a necessity to lead congregations

In the Church Universal, church leaders use different models while others may not use any models at all. We must discover which models are effective to produce fruitful ministry moving forward.

The foundations of this paper will include a summation of my personal background which serves as my motivation to pursue this project. The foundations will also include a biblical, theological, historical, and contemporary summary of how leadership can produce fruit in the twenty-first century church. Fruitfulness is defined as something or an entity that has long lasting health. When imagining fruit on a healthy tree as it relates to a church, it would suggest spiritual growth, souls being saved, disciples being made, meaningful ministries being birthed as well as implemented, a proven process to engage the next generation and men as well as ostracized subgroups, intentional leadership development, consistent financial stability, and authentic community engagement.

Personal Foundation

I have been a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church all of my life. My maternal family raised me in the Church and I was a part of the children's ministry growing up. We did not have a vibrant youth ministry so I chose to go to another church to attend their youth group. However, I attended most of the local, district, conference, and connectional meetings for our denomination because my mother was very active in the Missionary Society. She was the leader for missionaries for twenty years so I observed her commitment, passion, and effectiveness as a leader. My mother was a transformative leader

and I saw the fruit of her ministry but I also learned that not every leader is like my mother.

Growing up, I was a part of vibrant ministries. Each church that I attended before pastoring was large in number and ministries were meeting the needs of the context. I saw leaders who were serious about their responsibilities and intentional about glorifying God. Of course, every church has its challenges and there were some areas of ineffectiveness, but overall each church presented as a healthy congregation. My spiritual worldview concerning the church had been vibrancy. However, I had a limited worldview because I was not exposed to the “behind the scenes” reality.

When I began pastoring, I started to see the “behind the scenes” reality and recognized that the churches in our denomination were actually in decline. Many put on a “front” that they were vibrant so that they could impress the Bishop but in reality, they are in decline. Every church that I have been sent to in my pastoral ministry has been in decline. One assignment had no building and no members, and I was charged to replant the church with no resources from our denomination. The second church that I was sent to had experienced a major decline financially, numerically, and spiritually and the current church that I was assigned to was in decline once again which caused the church to suffer financially, spiritually, numerically, and even physically. We are therefore in the process of moving towards becoming a healthy church again.

These situations are examples of how the AME Zion Church is in decline in both suburban and urban settings. My hypothesis concerning the root of the

problem is that the lack of transformative and relevant leaders contributes to the issue at hand. The foundation of the AME Zion Church was a powerful movement in the late 1700s through the 1990s. The reason why our denomination was thriving was because of effective leadership but then those leaders were not intentional about mentoring the next generation which led to a lack of engagement from future generations. I also notice that families no longer raise their children within the church context, so extracurricular activities take precedence over the church. Another factor is the struggle surrounding work-life balance so people choose to rest on Sunday instead of engaging in spiritual formation within the context of the church. Therefore, in the twenty-first century we see denominational decline and much apathy in our great church which grieves me. Something must be done!

This study focused on assessing and discovering leadership models which will produce fruit in the twenty-first century church. The study diagnosed the problem while offering viable and effective solutions which will benefit the AME Zion Church moving forward. It is my desire that it would benefit both clergy and lay leaders as a blueprint as well as a strategy to bring meaningful change to how we operate as a church so that we can be agents of change and transformation.

Biblical Foundation

The biblical foundation considered the following scriptural passages: John 15:1-17 and Galatians 5:22-26. Through a careful examination of the sacred text, fruit is described as something that is healthy and a source of evidence to assess

effectiveness. For the consideration of this project, the imagery of fruit was used to assess effectiveness, holistic health, and characteristics of believers in Jesus Christ.

In the Johannine text, Jesus used an agricultural image because he was speaking to people who were familiar with the vine as a source of food (Collins 2016, 48). However, there is deeper significance to the vine language. In the Old Testament the image of the vine represents the people of God. The vine here is Israel, as God planted Israel to be the “true” vine, intending them to bear fruit (Collins 2016, 48). Fruit-bearing from a prophetic Old Testament point of view reveals to us that bearing fruit exemplifies a life of faithfulness as God brings His light to the world. Israel is the Lord’s servant and the Messiah is also the Lord’s servant (Collins 2016, 48). The theme of spiritual growth, fruit bearing, and harvest correlates [in the Gospels] (Choi 2000, 54).

Commentators reveal various images that are portrayed in the John 15 text. John 15:1-17 calls to the contemporary Christian church concerning self-identity and community. Self-identity is cultivated through the community. Community is displayed as interrelationship, mutuality, and indwelling (O’Day 1995, 760). Individual branches depend on their relationship to the vine and to the other branches. The vine is a radically non-hierarchical model and branches are only distinguishable by the fruit that they bear. “For John each individual is rooted in Jesus and hence gives up individual status to become one of many encircling branches as a community” (O’Day 1995, 760). Fruitful leadership is implemented most effectively within a community framework.

The imagery of the vine is compatible with the continuation of Israel-Church as the people of God (Murray 1987, 289). This image can only emerge through the redemptive ministry of Christ and how it liberates humanity. Therefore, the vine includes believers from every nation which confirms the power of community once again within transformative leadership practices (Murray 1987, 289).

On the other hand, as we examine the context of Galatians, we as readers must note that Paul is trying to draw a picture of the character of the Christian community as he is writing about the fruit of the Spirit. He argues that the characteristics of a Christian life are a result of our redemption (Bartlett 2016, 7). The only thing that constrains one from living in the Spirit from Paul's perspective is the flesh (Osiek 2012, 574). Paul believed that the age of the flesh or life in the flesh was guided by selfishness, self-absorption, self-promotion or inappropriate pride (Bartlett 2016, 10).

"When it comes to living by the Spirit, the proper word for practice of life under the Holy Spirit is fruit" (Bartlett 2016, 11). Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are the result of the spiritual life. The fruit of the Spirit springs from a life grounded upon faith. So the fruit of the Spirit portrays what life in the Spirit looks like which is a life that builds community as well as a life that is nurtured and brought forth by the goodness of God (Bartlett 2016, 11). Leadership that is fruitful is a portrait of a faithful and effective spiritual life.

The fruit of the Spirit contrasts from the works of the flesh because the fruit of the Spirit is the lifestyle of those who are indwelt and energized by the Spirit (Bruce 1982, 251). The fruit of the Spirit also confronts the disruptive behavior that the flesh produces because it is the divine nature which God gives us as a result of what he has done in and through Christ (Bruce 1982, 255). Living by the Spirit has positive results because commitment to God through Christ causes one to take on a new orientation which informs leadership practices (Longenecker 1990, 266-267).

Theological Foundation

The main theological themes emphasized in this section are liberation theology and pneumatology. These themes enable us to experience the fruit that leadership has to offer. Jesus offers a ministry of liberation for all and promises that once He ascended that the disciples would receive a Comforter as well as power from on high. The biblical text reveals that Jesus' ministry was liberating and filled with the Spirit, which emphasizes how liberation and pneumatology lead the Church in the twenty-first century towards transformative leadership.

Scripture which informs our theology expresses how Jesus was anointed by the power of the Spirit (pneumatology) and was sent to bring liberation. This is the divine assignment of Jesus, and the church is challenged to be the embodiment of Christ in the earthly realm. A ministry of liberation empowered by the Spirit was the recipe for His transformative leadership approach which ultimately caused the Christian movement to spread.

James Cone is the noted theologian who originated the theological perspective called "Liberation Theology." This theological perspective was embraced initially by the African American community. Therefore, African Methodism and African Americans as a whole stand on the premise of liberation and this approach serves as our hermeneutical lens concerning how we approach both scripture as well as the ministry that we offer. It is impossible to do Christian theology with integrity in America without asking Cone's question, "What has the gospel to do with the black struggle for liberation?" (Cone 1997, 20).

Cone emphasizes how Jesus is a liberator and intentional about offering freedom to the oppressed. "The acceptance of the gift of freedom transforms our perception of our social and political existence" (Cone 1997, 33). Liberation is a mindset and an identity. Theologically, the Church is challenged to offer liberation which changes a person's identity from oppression to freedom which is evidence of fruit.

Another component or aspect of liberation theology is Black womanist theology. Black womanist theology seeks to dispel injustice not just from a racial perspective, but also from a class and gender perspective as well (Townes 2011, 159). This theological point of reference provides both challenge and prescriptive solutions. Therefore, womanist theology challenges the Black Church to examine the oppressive messages it gives both consciously and unconsciously to Black people. These messages include ageism, classism, colorism, homophobia, racism, sexism, and others (Townes 2011, 164-165). Townes also notes that the

conversation that womanists seek to convey includes a partnership between men and women, the care and nurture of children, respect for the elderly, a prophetic witness, and a reflection of justice and love for all humanity (Townes 2011, 175). The conversation points to the liberating ministry of Christ.

Jurgen Moltmann expresses that the spirit of life is the Spirit of God. Life happens because of the Spirit's work. "The Spirit is more than just one of God's gifts among others; the Holy Spirit is the unrestricted presence of God in which our life wakes up, becomes wholly and entirely living, and is endowed with the energies of life" (Moltmann 1997, 54). Moltmann affirms that the Spirit is unrestricted and contributes to life holistically. In other words, life happens when the Spirit is present. Therefore, even the Church will experience life when the Spirit is activated which brings no restrictions and true liberation can come.

Millard J. Erickson speaks to the theology of the Holy Spirit in powerful ways dealing with the historical implications as well as the practical implications while exposing some of the misunderstanding. He believes that the Holy Spirit is a person, not an impersonal force, meaning that we can have a relationship with the Holy Spirit as it is with other persons of the Trinity (Erickson 2013, 784). When we look at the Holy Spirit we must recognize that we can rely on the Spirit for empowerment, as the Holy Spirit releases gifts upon believers wisely as well as gives us understanding. The Holy Spirit also invokes the miraculous to be made known in the life of the believers as well as the Church (Erickson 2013, 803).

Historical Foundation

In this section, the history of the AME Zion Church is explored. African Methodism was birthed out of oppression and provided a ministry of liberation for African Americans. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was a movement founded in Harlem, New York, and James Varick is the noted founder of this movement. The AME Zion Church is a movement that bore fruit for African Methodism and James Varick was seen to be a fruitful leader historically (Walls 1974, 30).

In 1974, Bishop William Jacob Walls wrote a book called *The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: The Reality of the Black Church*. Walls asserts that “Varick led, influenced, and structured the movement that blossomed into the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in America. He believes that Varick’s unwavering leadership through turbulent waters of establishing a new denomination led to his elevation to the bishopric” (Walls 1974, 44).

Varick was one of Zion’s first three licensed preachers and was one of the first three people of African descent ordained in the state of New York in 1806 (Walls 1974, 48). After his licensing, Varick led the movement for separation from John Street Church which oppressed African Americans from worshiping with whites and denied ordination to African Americans who acknowledged a call to preach. He also encouraged his followers to build their first church in 1799 (Walls 1974, 88). The movement began with Varick holding separate meetings for African Americans in his home and then began to protest over dissatisfaction with John Street Church.

In the year 1796, when the Colored members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York became increased, and feeling a desire for the privilege of holding meetings of their own, where they might have an opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts among themselves, and thereby be more useful one to the other, a few of the most intelligent of our brethren obtained permission from Bishop Francis Asbury to hold meetings by themselves, in the intervals of the regular preaching hours of our white brethren, in the best manner they could. (Rush 1843, 9)

History records that there were eight predominantly black classes (small groups) while two of them were all male classes (small groups) who expressed their grievance with how they were treated at John Street Church. This group received permission to hold separate meetings and the movement was officially launched in October 1796 (Walls 1974, 47-48). Varick and the eight classes refused to live and worship according to oppressive standards and ideologies. They decided to experience liberation and freedom so they could express their religious as well as theological freedom which resulted in fruit, including membership, Kingdom characteristics and transformative ministry approaches.

Historical documentation also records that the foundation of Zion Methodism was not always easy but Varick stood like a rock amid some raging storms, and brought the old ship of Zion through a series of crises to freedom (Walls 1974, 42). Varick is seen as a transformative leader. The AME Zion Church was a progressive movement because it sought to create an equitable church environment for black membership to grow in God's graces and discipleship. Varick had a very revolutionary spirit and if he as well as the classes remained under the Methodist Episcopal Church, they would have remained stuck under the status quo rather than transforming into a movement providing liberation.

A separation was needed for the African American community because the revolutionary spirit informed by the gospel brought relief in lieu of the limitations placed upon Blacks in that context. So the AME Zion Church became “A movement providing freedom of self-expression, religious, and social determination” (McKenith 2018, 19). However, even though the movement was to provide freedom, the movement had become exclusive to service only Africans or those of African descent (Moore 1884, 22).

Contemporary Foundation

The contemporary aspect of this project highlights various leadership models that will assist leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church to become fruitful in their context. It also assesses the type of culture that will create an environment for fruitful models to be at work. Transformative leadership is paramount to the growth and survival of the Church.

In writing for the business world, John Kotter points out that leadership is different from management, but there should be an even balance of leadership and management which positively impacts one’s ability to lead (Kotter 2011, 37). He also speaks of the tension between the two styles working in concert with one another; however, Kotter speaks of the power of collaboration because in the church context, leadership and management styles are needed. For example, management involves planning while leadership involves setting a direction. Management also brings about control and problem solving while leadership brings motivation. Kotter also suggests that “management includes administration and staffing while leadership includes aligning people” (Kotter

2011, 38). Therefore, both styles are needed to produce fruitful leadership in the church context.

Lovett Weems is a leadership expert in the study of church leadership in his various books. Weems believes that

Church leadership is never solely about personal authority, a leader's style or a management process but rather about the faithful future of faith traditions and communities. Leadership becomes a channel of God's grace as we help God's people discern to what God is calling them and help them take that next faithful step. (Weems 2010, 1)

Leaders within a church context must recognize their responsibility which is to help people discern their purpose and their destiny while giving them that "push" to pursue it through vision.

Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby have created a guide to spiritual leadership and how it has the ability to move people on to God's agenda. One important way of moving people to what God wants them to do in the earth realm is building effective teams. "Great leaders multiply their efforts by developing teams . . . this must be one of a leader's top priorities" (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 294). Leaders must develop a dynamic culture because outstanding tasks cannot be accomplished in isolation. When vision is executed, it is supported and funded by a team who is committed to the work at hand. Blackaby and Blackaby understand that a mission that brings challenge requires a chosen team to ensure that the mission is accomplished (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 296). Teams will bring much diversity which includes perspective, skills, and knowledge so building an effective team will influence fruitful leadership.

Samuel Chand speaks of how culture influences as well as controls vision which then controls leadership models. Fruitful leadership models will not work unless the culture is prepared to embrace the model. “To create a new culture, you have to destroy the old one” (Chand 2011, 113). This process is challenging because it involves intentional as well as risky processes. It can also be a painful process but is necessary. People are mostly resistant to change when they are used to a certain culture but in order for a Kingdom Culture to come to the forefront which creates an environment for fruitful leadership, the old culture must be destroyed which makes space for a new culture.

Context

The desired survey participants were both clergy and lay leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. This study attempted to discover to what extent leadership models are being utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church that produce fruit. The survey participants were selected from a diverse group of churches within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal area which includes churches from the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland, and Delaware as well as churches in Washington D.C., Guyana, Barbados and St. Vincent.

The key focus was aimed at evaluating the process of using various leadership models within the churches to produce fruitful ministry approaches. As an ordained Elder in the AME Zion Church, I have been a member of the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District for sixteen years as a minister. My experience with

many of the churches as it relates to leadership models has been both positive and negative. Observing the impact of leadership and how it influences church growth has led me to pursue this project to determine what models would produce fruitful ministry.

Project Goals

The purpose of this project was to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit being utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The research question was: To what extent are leadership models that produce fruit being utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church? The project goals were:

1. To discover the current leadership models within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church.
2. To discover the extent of how leadership models influence church growth.
3. To discover the extent to which church leaders allow the Spirit to guide their leadership models.
4. To discover the extent to which church leaders engage in the community as part of their leadership model.
5. To discover the extent of how the current leadership models produce fruitful leaders.
6. To discover the extent to which church leaders mentor the next generation for leadership.
7. To discover leadership styles that contribute to a church growth model.

8. To discover how churches embrace a Kingdom model within their context to cultivate vision.

Design, Procedure, and Assessment

The design of the project began with the development of a survey that would gather information about views on church leadership from clergy and lay leadership. The project proceeded with an online survey assessment, with a plan to gather survey data from a minimum of fifty church leaders in the target population area. The focus was aimed at determining the leaders' awareness of various leadership models to produce fruitful ministry approaches. The assessment included quantitative and qualitative questions which were developed based on the project goals. The procedure gathered survey data from a select group of church leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

The church leaders were identified by their appointment of Pastor, Supernumerary Preacher, Conference, and District Officer as indicated by Bishop W. Darin Moore within the confines of the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. The church leaders selected were only within the targeted population. Both clergy and laity were equally represented. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the degree of effectiveness; ranging from totally agree to totally disagree. There was one open ended question for each goal.

Personal Goals

Throughout my academic journey, I have always believed that each degree program would contribute to my spiritual formation. God places us in

various situations to strengthen our relationship with Him. He also provides opportunities for us to cultivate our purpose. As I am discovering the leadership models that produce fruit for my context, I also want to ensure that I am producing fruit within my personal ministry as a leader. Therefore, I believe that it is imperative to have these goals in place to grow as a disciple of Christ first, then as a transformative leader in the twenty-first century.

1. I will become an agent of liberation within my context and abroad through more communal engagement.
2. I will become more intentional embodying Christ by becoming more Kingdom focused by meditating and studying on Jesus' focus on the Kingdom.
3. I will assess and practice how I can become a more fruitful leader by personal reflection and critical thinking.

Definition of Terms

Fruit- the evidence of an intimate relationship with Christ and effective ministry practices. It is also the continuous process of discipleship and continuous birthing process for leaders.

Fruit-bearing- fruit on a healthy tree (church) would suggest spiritual growth, souls being saved, disciples being made, meaningful ministries being birthed as well as implemented, a proven process to engage the next generation and men as well as ostracized subgroups, intentional leadership development, consistent financial stability, and authentic community engagement that continues throughout generations to come.

Leaders-Ordained clergy and laity who lead churches and various ministries within the AME Zion context.

A.M.E. Zion Church- The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The foundation of this denomination provided a ministry of liberation fighting against the injustices in society.

Mid Atlantic Episcopal District- Congregations and leaders in the Philadelphia and Baltimore, Virginia, East Tennessee Virginia, Ohio, Allegheny, Guyana, St Vincent, and Barbados Conferences led by Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate.

Kingdom Culture- A culture that enables people to live in peace, meaning, prosperity, rightly connected to God and to one another. A Kingdom Culture is cultivated by having a true understanding of God (Farrelly 2017, 301). It is also a culture that births fruitful leaders who are controlled by the Spirit.

Oppression- All forms of injustice (racism, sexism, classism, etc.)

Womanist- challenges the Black Church to examine the oppressive messages it gives both consciously and unconsciously to Black people. These messages include ageism, classism, colorism, homophobia, racism, sexism, and others (Townes 2011,164-165)

Plan of the Paper

The current section, Chapter One, provides an overview of the dissertation. Chapter Two guides the reader through the biblical, theological, and historical foundations as to their implications for this project. Chapter Three reviews the contemporary literature for this project. Chapter Four will provide details about the design, procedure, and assessment instrument used to complete this project. Chapter Five will give the data from the assessment

instrument for this project. Chapter Six will highlight reflections on the data through analyzing its meaning, importance, and application project.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

In May 2015, I received my first Pastoral Appointment which was Abundant Life AME Zion Church which had no location, no members, and no budget. In September 2016, the Bishop appointed me to serve at the SG Spottswood AME Zion Church in Landover, MD and the church experienced a decline in membership which contributed to a financial decline. Then in May 2019, the Bishop appointed me to serve at the Homewood AME Zion Church in Pittsburgh, PA after my predecessor suddenly passed away. Even as the church was grieving this sudden loss, I immediately discovered that the church had experienced a tremendous decline in membership and was in much debt. Persons had become disengaged and discouraged. In all of these instances, I started to see a correlation.

As a result of prayer and meditation, I started to believe that the problem is fruitlessness from a leadership perspective. From my point of view, there has been no guide to inform pastors and leaders of the types of leadership practices that would contribute to fruitful ministry approaches. So this project was birthed out of my personal concern and a desire to help other leaders to discover leadership models that actually produce fruit.

This chapter will discuss “fruit” biblically, theologically, and historically. For the consideration of this project, the imagery of fruit will be used to assess effectiveness, holistic health, and characteristics of believers in Jesus Christ. The biblical foundation of this chapter will consider two passages of scripture from the

Gospel of John and the Epistle to the Galatians that both provide powerful biblical images of “fruit” and how it informs leadership models. The main theological themes emphasized in this section are liberation theology and pneumatology which contribute to the “fruit” dynamic within a leadership framework. The chapter will conclude with a historical look at the AME Zion Church. Through these observations we will lay the groundwork for fruitful leadership models.

Biblical Foundation

The biblical foundation will explore John 15:1-11 and Galatians 5:22-25 to discover the biblical implications for fruitful leadership models. The Gospel of John is considered to be a spiritual gospel as it outlines the ministry of Christ more intentionally according to O’Day (O’ Day 2015, 421). Scholars are puzzled about the span of time that the gospel was written and what source was used (O’Day 2015, 422). However, scholars suggest that the writer of John had no prior knowledge of the Synoptic Gospels, but there was an independent source which was both oral and written (Conway 2018, 1919). Others believe that the author had some previous knowledge but chose to write in another form to present the ministry of Christ.

Faith plays a very significant role in the Gospel of John (Lindsay 2016, 193). It appears that believing in Jesus is the prerequisite for joining the Christian movement. However, we do not see faith’s role specifically in every passage in the gospel, including our text for consideration, but faith is found “in between” the lines. We see that keeping the commandments of Christ and the Word of God

are integral to having faith in Christ. So, knowing this proves John's understanding of faith as multidimensional (Lindsay 2016, 194). When one keeps the commandments, it is closely connected to loving Jesus and remaining in Jesus which is prevalent in the True Vine Parable. Obedience to Christ is not to be seen as legalistic, but is an important part for Christians to live in a loving relationship with their Lord (Lindsay 2016, 199).

The Old Testament Image of the Vine

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower” (John 15:1)

(Unless otherwise noted, all scripture passages will be from the New Revised Standard Version, NRSV). Jesus' words carry great significance when using the Old Testament imagery of the vine. Ancient Israel was an agrarian society and a key crop in that context was grapes (Sproul 2009, 3749). The vine imagery was used as a metaphor for Israel as a nation. God called the nation of Israel His vine where He planted and tended it and He expected it to spread fruit to all nations (Sproul 2009, 3750).

The Gospels reveal that the teaching of the Old Testament with respect to Israel was fulfilled in Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament Israel (Sproul 2009, 3750). God held his vine accountable in the Old Testament to repent of their sins and return to covenant relationship with God. Within the Old Testament, we discover that God had planted the vineyard and the vineyard is in poor condition. However, one of the psalmists pleaded that God would restore His grace upon Israel and it would be done through the Son of Man (Sproul 2009,

3750). When Jesus came in the fullness of time, Jesus announced that He was the true vine and God the Father was the vinedresser (Sproul 2009, 3751).

Warren Wiersbe sheds light on the Old Testament image of the Vine. The cultivation of vineyards was important to the life and economy of Israel. Herod's temple was adorned with a golden vine, therefore Christ is not introducing a new image to the New Testament community that He was addressing (Wiersbe 1986, 732). There are various vines represented in scripture. The past vine was the nation of Israel who practiced oppression instead of justice; unrighteousness instead of righteousness which produced distress (Wiersbe 1986, 732). As a result, God had to deal with Israel but it did not produce lasting results.

The future vine is the "vine of the earth" which is represented in Revelation as a Gentile world system ripening for God's judgement (Wiersbe 1986, 732). Believers are branches in the "vine of heaven" but the unsaved are branches in the "vine of the earth". The unsaved depend on the world while believers depend on Jesus. The "vine of the earth" will be cut down and destroyed when Jesus returns (Wiersbe 1986, 732). The present Vine is Christ and the vine includes branches. Christ is the "true Vine" which confirms that all other vines are a replica of the Truth (Wiersbe 1986, 732).

The Synoptic Image of the Vine

It has been debated whether or not John relates to the parables in the synoptic Gospels. I have questioned this myself. However, P. Richard Choi finds a correlation between a few synoptic parables and the Vine parable of John 15. One of those parables, the vineyard and the tenants, is found in Matthew 21:33-

40; Mark 12:1-9; and Luke 20:9-16. The themes of spiritual growth, fruit bearing, and harvest correlate with this synoptic parable (Choi 2000, 54).

The vineyard and tenants correlates with John's parable. It deals with a vine as well as a vinedresser. In the synoptic Gospels, the son is cast outside whereas John deals with unfruitful branches being cast out. The tenants in the synoptic Gospels are evil human agents and the Vinedresser in John is God the Father. Choi notices that the notion that fruit belongs to God and not the tenants is seen even in the midst of the apparent differences between the parables (Choi 2000, 57). Also, both parables reveal that the religious leaders are the reason for Israel's frustration in history.

The wicked in the synoptic parable represents religious leaders of Israel who interfere with God's claim on the harvest of fruits (Choi 2000, 57). The religious leaders actually hinder the harvest. However, the harvest belongs to the Father because even in John, it is God and not the religious leaders who will prune and dress the vine and finally receive the harvest (Choi 2000, 57). So, from John's perspective what is holding back the harvest is not the sins of the people *per se*, but the desire of the religious leaders to control the destiny of Israel. John emphasizes uncontrolled growth so the leaders of the church must not try to do the work of the Father but allow God to do what He needs to do to cause growth (Choi, 2000, 59). Leaders serve as facilitators of growth, but they do not serve as the grower.

The Gospel of John reveals that the Father is the Master of the vineyard, which supports the sacredness of growth, but also emphasizes the nature of

human interference (Choi 2000, 75). Choi continues to affirm the parallel between the synoptic parables and the Johannine parable. John also reveals the impartation of life but the synoptic parables point to how growth or fruitfulness presupposes the life of the Son. Therefore, the scripture reminds leaders to humbly serve as facilitators and allow God to do the implementation (Choi 2000, 75).

The Importance of Abiding

“Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.” (John 15:4)

Jesus introduced the rich word “abide” which has to do with remaining close to Him. Our productivity, our fruitfulness is directly linked with remaining close to Him (Sproul 2009, 3755). The closer we stay to Christ, the more fruit we will bear and the more we wander out from the center, the less fruit we will produce (Sproul 2009, 3756).

A branch is weak and useless, it is good for either bearing or burning but not for building (Wiersbe 1986, 732). The branch cannot produce its own life because it must draw that life from the vine. Through communion and abiding with Christ by way of the Spirit, it is possible to bear fruit. The word “abide” is used eleven times in John 15 (Wiersbe 1986, 733). Abiding means fellowship with Christ and His life causes us to produce fruit. Abiding happens through the Word of God and the confession of sin which includes obedience (Wiersbe 1986, 733).

Abiding in Christ reveals certain evidences which center around fruit bearing. Abiding in Christ also includes pruning which produces more fruit where prayers are answered and a love for Christ as well as others is experienced (Wiersbe 1986, 733). The abiding relationship is natural to the branch and the vine but it is cultivated through Christ. Abiding in Christ demands worship, meditation, prayer, sacrifice, and service. Through intentional cultivation there is no desire to return as an unfruitful branch (Wiersbe 1986, 733).

Fruit is a common phenomenon in John 15. Living organisms produce fruit and it takes time as well as cultivation to do so because a good crop does not come overnight (Wiersbe 1986, 734). Branches do not eat fruit; others do. The production of fruit is not a self-pleasing exercise but is an exercise of service. Scripture reveals the fruit that is produced in the life of a Christian which includes winning souls and participating in the harvest (Wiersbe 1986, 734). The production of fruit comes through holiness and obedience. As we will explore later, the fruit of the Spirit is the character of one who produces fruit (Wiersbe 1986, 734).

Deception as a branch will be detected because real spiritual fruit has seeds for more fruit. Man-made results are dead while Spirit-produced fruit has reproductive qualities. A true branch, united with the vine will always bear fruit. Fruit is the evidence of life; if there no fruit, the branch is worthless (Wiersbe 1986, 734). Abiding in Christ should produce His love, joy, and peace in our hearts. As branches in the Vine, not only are we challenged to abide but we are commissioned with responsibility (Wiersbe 1986, 734).

When we are intentional about being a vehicle of Christ to others, then we are considered a friend of Christ (John 15:15). When Christ calls us friend, He treats us as a co-worker in bringing the light to the world. Friends of Christ are those who fully believe in Jesus (Segovia 1982, 124). We bring light and blessings to the world simply by staying connected to Christ while fully believing in Him. Leaders serve as co-workers with Christ when we understand the mandate of being a vehicle of Christ to the world and even the Church (Segovia 1982, 120).

The pruning process is nothing with abiding in Christ even through suffering, no good can come of it except you have a vital, continuous, everlasting union with Christ. A branch cannot be taken away temporarily because its life depends upon the perfect continuity of its union. Therefore, in Christ, the branch is the vine and the vine is in the branch (Spurgeon 2014, 232). According to Spurgeon there must be doctrinal vitality and a spiritual attachment to the person of Christ (Spurgeon 2014, 233).

The writer of John is seeking to address a community situation (Segovia 1982, 119). We recognize the fact that discipleship requires fruit bearing. However, the text reveals that some are not bearing fruit which may mean that some believers are not behaving as they should which is a problem. "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5) From a New Testament standpoint, the branches represent the Twelve which does not include Judas.

The branches are those who saw Jesus' anointing and Glory from the beginning, confessed Him as having the words of life, who will continue works of Christ even greater works after his departure, who are different from the world and the Jews, who will be loved and abided in by both the Father and Jesus are given the Spirit. (Segovia 1982, 119)

There are those who have fully accepted Jesus and His ministry, so they were cleansed by the Word as the text reveals. We cannot be that branch on the vine until we have fully surrendered.

Jesus is referred to as the true vine because in that context some branches were adopting a different understanding of Christ by seeking to hold onto Jewish customs as well as the Law which is the problem in the text. However, what will correct the problem is abiding in Christ, which suggests that one can continue being a branch (Segovia 1982, 121). The twenty-first century church has the same problem but what will correct the problem is being that vehicle which will lead others into a true and right understanding of Christ.

There are consequences for branches who do not want to abide in Christ, and the prospect of destruction is presented in verse 6 of John 15. "Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned" (John 15:6). In comparison, when one chooses to abide, prayers will be answered as a result which we have seen in verse 7 of John 15. "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7). The scripture reveals that

there are positive and negative consequences depending on one's dependence on the Vine.

To correct the inner-Christian problem to conform to the culture, "believers must not abandon the original message, the original understanding of Christ which made them believers in the first place; abiding will result in the glorification of the Father" (Segovia 1982, 122). Many are struggling with this inner-Christian problem, but the remedy is to never abandon the original message and understanding of Christ as the scripture calls us to. In the pluralistic nature of our society, believers must defend the gospel and not be coerced to abandon it.

Through continued research, commentators reveal various images that are portrayed in the John 15 passage such as community, self-identity and the cultivation of a meaningful relationship with Christ. John 15:1-11 calls the contemporary Christian church to pursue self-identity and authentic community. Self-identity is cultivated through the community. Community is displayed as interrelationship, mutuality, and indwelling (O'Day 1995, 760). Individual branches depend on their relationship to the vine and to the other branches. The vine is a radically non-hierarchical model and branches are only distinguishable by the fruit that they bear.

John 15:8 Bearing Fruit

"For John each individual is rooted in Jesus and hence gives up individual status to become one of many encircling branches as a community" (O'Day 1995, 760). Fruitful leadership is implemented most effectively within a community framework.

The imagery of the vine is compatible with the continuation of the Israel-Church as the people of God as stated (Murray 1987, 289).

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.
(John 15:9-11)

This image can only emerge through the redemptive ministry of Christ and how it liberates humanity. Therefore, the Vine includes believers from every nation which confirms the power of community once again within transformative leadership practices (Murray 1987, 289).

In the next section of the biblical foundation we will explore Paul's letter to the Church at Galatia which highlights the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-25.

The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians)

As we examine the context of Galatians 5:22-25, we must note that Paul is drawing a picture of the character of the Christian community as he writes about the fruit of the Spirit. He argues that the characteristics of a Christian life come about not because of redemption, but as Bartlett notes, as a result of our redemption (Bartlett 2016, 7). The context of Galatians is that Paul's intended readers were following after intruders or false prophets, so Paul was seeking to address this issue. We cannot dismiss the fact that Paul was ill when passing through Galatia; Paul was ill, and the Galatians cared for him. In his illness, he pressed through as a leader to preach the gospel to the Galatians (Hayes 2015, 1022).

At the time Paul was writing, there was much confusion about whether Christians had to maintain their Jewish practices in order to follow Christ. Paul pressed the claim that they did not need to observe Jewish practices to be among God's chosen people (Israel) (Bartlett 2016, 7). However, Paul believed in the continuity between the laws of the Jewish covenant and the new covenant that came through Christ. Therefore, Paul admonished the Galatian church to combine what they knew about the Jewish traditions while embracing what Christ offers through the new covenant or the new standard of the Kingdom that He established (Bartlett 2016, 7).

The foundation of being a part of the Christian community is faith which is what God required. Therefore, when new converts received the gift of faith they did not need to pursue Jewish traditions. By faith the Galatians were baptized on the basis of their faith which made them righteous. Their faith was sealed when they received the Holy Spirit (Bartlett 2016, 8). As stated earlier with the parable of the vine, faith is a crucial part to engaging in a meaningful relationship with Christ.

However, after Paul recovered from his illness and moved on, there were other teachers who arrived and spoke against what Paul was saying. The other teachers believed that the law was a prerequisite for Godly living. As a result, some of the Galatians were persuaded or seduced by the teachers (Bartlett 2016, 8). As Paul was writing this letter, he stood firm on the truth of the Gospel. Unlike other Pauline letters, Galatians does not begin with prayer or thanksgiving because after he greeted them, he started to attack the issue at hand.

We see confirmation of this in the beginning of the letter to the Galatians:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel – not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. (Gal. 1:3-7)

Paul was desperately trying to call the Galatians back to the real gospel where all of humankind responds to faith (Bartlett 2016, 8). As the gospel text suggests earlier, the ministry of Jesus and now of Paul, who is an apostle, was to reveal to new converts as well as refocus Christians to turn back to the true essence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul makes a distinction between the flesh and the spirit. His claim describes the division primarily as the division between the age of the flesh and the age of the Spirit (Bartlett 2016, 9). Therefore, Paul is insisting that the age of the flesh is passing away while the age of the Spirit is coming forth which will be a radical new creation (Bartlett 2016, 9). The age of the flesh is the age of obedience to the law which means that the flesh as well as the law stands against the Gospel as well as the Spirit. On the other hand, in the age of the Spirit neither circumcision nor any other Jewish tradition matters. The turning point for the Galatians was when they heard the true essence of the Gospel and received it by faith (Bartlett 2016, 9). The Spirit follows their belief in the gospel and the face of all the world is transformed. Contextually, Paul envisioned for the community to be under the influence of the Spirit (Bartlett 2016, 9)

Paul believed that the age of the flesh or life in the flesh was guided by selfishness, self-absorption, self-promotion or inappropriate pride (Bartlett 2016, 10).

Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:19-21)

As a result, in the context of Galatians, the “flesh” is what divides the community because the Kingdom of God will not be inherited which is a community, but the Spirit brings the community together. The spiritual life is driven, shaped, and enticed by the Holy Spirit (Bartlett 2016, 10).

“When it comes to living by the Spirit, the proper word for practice of life under the Holy Spirit is fruit” (Bartlett 2016, 11). Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are the result of the spiritual life.

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-25)

The fruit of the Spirit springs from a life grounded upon faith. So the fruit of the Spirit portrays what life in the Spirit looks like, what life is that builds community, life that is seeded, nurtured, and brought forth by the goodness of God (Bartlett 2016, 11).

Martin Luther suggests that the Apostle Paul does not speak of the works of Spirit as he describes the flesh but he calls these Christian virtues, fruits of the

Spirit. Fruit is “karpos” in Greek which is translated as the produce of the harvest as well as the result of something (Crews 2019, 4125). Love is the principle fruit of the Spirit and the rest of the fruit attach itself to love (Luther 1937, 27-28).

Love in Greek is “agape” which is translated as the love God has for His people and a love that is self-denying, non-emotional and seeking the best for another (Crews 2019, 4125).

Joy means sweet thoughts of Christ that refresh the believer. Joy in Greek is “chara” which means the cause or the occasion for the joy which is gladness (Crews 2019, 4125). Peace refers to having peace with God and one another. Peace in Greek is “eirene” which is a state of tranquility, security, safety and prosperity, inner contentment. Longsuffering is a quality that enables a person to endure adversity.

Patience in Greek is “makrothumia” which means constancy and perseverance (Crews 2019, 4125). Gentleness speaks to Christian conduct and life which suggests that one can overlook other people’s faults while being able to get along with all types of people (Luther 1937, 28). Kindness in Greek is “chrestotes” which is integrity, excellence, and uprightness (Crews 2019, 4125).

Goodness refers to one who is willing to help others in need. Goodness in Greek is “agathosune” which means uprightness of heart and life (Crews 2019, 4125). Luther suggests that the fruit of faith does not mean faith in Christ but faith in others which means that this type of faith is not suspicious of people but believes the best from all personalities which is a different perspective (Luther

1937, 29). Faithfulness in Greek is “pistis” which means a conviction of the truth of anything (Crews 2019, 4125).

Meekness is one who is not quick to get angry. Gentleness in Greek is “prautes” which means a kind disposition, meekness, and mildness (Crews 2019, 4125). Temperance is one who lives a sober life. Self-control in Greek is “egkrateia” which means the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions (Crews 2019, 4125). Paul is suggesting that where the Spirit is, men (women) gain new attitudes (Luther 1937, 29).

To live by the Spirit means that we have entered into a spiritual life in Christ by the working of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we live by the Spirit but our justification was a one-time event that occurred when we believed and entered into Christ’s salvation (Crews 2019, 4126). On the other hand, our entrance into the Kingdom began when God declared our salvation but continues with sanctification. Walking by the Spirit is an ongoing process of life. The behavior of one who belongs to Christ is to be in harmony with the direction of God’s Spirit (Crews 2019, 4126).

Warren Wiersbe adds that the characteristics that God wants in our lives are seen in the ninefold fruit of the Spirit (Wiersbe 1975, 133). When a person lives in the sphere of love then one experiences joy. Love and joy together produce peace. The first three qualities express the Godward aspect of a Christian life. Longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness express the manmade aspect of a Christian life (Wiersbe 1975, 133). Faith, meekness, and temperance are self-ward qualities in the Christian life. The cultivation of fruit is essential but

there must be a right atmosphere before the fruit will grow. The fruit cannot grow in every climate. Fruit grows in a climate blessed with an abundance of the Spirit and the Word (Wiersbe 1975, 135).

Fruit that is produced should be eaten, not put on display. People around us are starving for love, joy, peace, and the other graces of the Spirit. We do not bear fruit for our own consumption, we bear fruit that others might be fed and helped so Christ can be glorified (Wiersbe 1975, 135). Believers are charged to take that assignment seriously.

From a Womanist perspective, Galatians 5:22-25 confirms or reveals life in the Spirit. The only thing that constrains one from living in the Spirit from Paul's perspective is the flesh (Osiek 2012, 574). The flesh originates in the mind and Paul shows us in his writings that the flesh is the human ability to put self in the place of God which also means to resist God's Spirit. The root of the flesh is present both in men and women equally, even when the manifestation is revealed in different forms (Osiek 2012, 574). The fruit of the Spirit guides the believer not to live according to their human ability for self-absorption.

From an Afro-centric perspective, the fruit of the Spirit is once again the characteristics of the Spirit-led life. The flesh can destroy unity and community while the fruit of the Spirit promotes corporate well-being (Braxton 2007, 344). The Spirit empowers believers and leaders to seek what is right both in their relationships with God and people. A social dynamic is at work with this hermeneutical perspective. Paul speaks about ethics from a social dynamic, not a singular one. The fruit of the Spirit portrays ethical standards for believers and

leaders. As a result, the Holy Spirit compels believers to engage the world with the hopes of returning it to holiness and wholeness (Braxton 2007, 344). In his discussion of Galatians, Braxton brings to light that the fruit of the Spirit correlates to social justice. Therefore, from the Afrocentric hermeneutical perspective, the passage reveals that Paul's description of the Spirit-led life brings systemic, communal, and influential change.

Globally, Paul's letter shows us that behaviors of the Spirit are those that build community and affirm relationships with our neighbor (Miguez 2004, 470). Therefore, the virtues of the Spirit confront oppressive and religious traditions that seek to tear down. Our role as believers is not to serve in competition or look at the other as a threat but instead, as an opportunity for community. The Spirit is not a new form of evasion but a new means of living one's life in relation to the other (Miguez 2004, 470).

As a result, the fruit of the Spirit contrasts from the works of the flesh because the fruit of the Spirit is the lifestyle of those who are indwelt and energized by the Spirit (Bruce 1982, 151). The fruit of the Spirit also fosters the disruptive behavior that the flesh produces because it is the fruit of that divine nature which God gives as a result of what He has done in and by Christ (Bruce 1982, 255). Living by the Spirit has positive results because commitment to God through Christ causes one to take on a new orientation which informs leadership practices (Longenecker 1990, 266-267).

Both biblical texts provide a framework for what fuels leadership models from a biblical standpoint. The biblical texts cause us to examine how Jesus and

Paul explain the necessary components of fruitful leadership. When we put both of the biblical texts into practice in our context, we will see fruit produced which will last throughout generations. In the next section, we will explore that theological foundations that contribute to leadership models that produce fruit.

Theological Foundation

Scripture which informs our theology expresses how Jesus was anointed by the power of the Spirit (pneumatology) and was sent to bring liberation. This is the divine assignment of Jesus, and the Church is challenged to be the embodiment of Christ in the earth realm. A ministry of liberation empowered by the Spirit was the recipe for His transformative leadership approach which ultimately caused the Christian movement to spread.

Liberation Theology

Liberation theology originated from Christian theologies in Africa, Asia, and South America, and from Blacks in the United States (Cone 1986, 103). Stephen Pattison shares that liberation theology focuses on freeing people from all that shackles them and stops them from living human lives that match their potential (Pattison 1994, 28). From the Latin perspective, liberation is when the oppressed come together, acknowledge their situation, and organize themselves into a movement (Boff 1987, 5). Gustavo Gutierrez, considered one of the founders of this school of thought, believes that liberation theology is theology done through involvement with the poor and oppressed in their struggle for freedom (Gutierrez 1974, 27).

Black Theology

Black Theology is a theological perspective that has deep roots within the African American community, as James Cone understands. James Cone was named as the “Father of Black Theology” (Butler 2019, 1). Cone was “a central figure in the development of black liberation theology in the 1960s and ’70s who argued for racial justice and an interpretation of the Christian Gospel that elevated the voices of the oppressed” (Fortin 2018, 1). African Methodism stands on this premise of Black Theology because Cone was an ordained Elder in the AME Church and it serves as our hermeneutical lens concerning how we approach scripture as well as the ministry that we offer. “I do think that it is impossible to do Christian theology with integrity in America without asking the question, what has the gospel to do with the black struggle for liberation?” (Cone 1997, 20).

Cone emphasizes how Jesus is a liberator and is intentional about offering freedom to the oppressed. “The acceptance of the gift of freedom transforms our perception of our social and political existence” (Cone 1997, 33). Liberation is a mindset and it is an identity. Theologically, the Church is challenged to offer liberation which changes a person’s identity from oppression to freedom which is evidence of fruit.

Black theology is supported and confirmed by liberation theology. Cone suggests that God has chosen Blacks to be His chosen people because they are not elected to be Yahweh’s suffering people (Cone 2010, 59). We are indeed elected as His chosen people because of our oppression against our will and

God's, so He has decided to make our liberation His own undertaking. As a result, since African Americans are freed from suffering because of God, they are tasked to break the chains around them (Cone 2010, 59). This task is considered a very dangerous responsibility because it calls African Americans to embody the prophetic witness on earth.

In exploring liberation theology and the subtopic of black theology, Cone argues that God is Black through displaying His love and righteousness. He states, "There is no place in black theology for a colorless God in a society where human beings suffer precisely because of their color" (Cone 2010, 67). He believes the essence of biblical revelation is found in the fact that the blackness of God suggests that God has made the oppressed condition His own condition because scripture reveals that the liberation of the oppressed is a part of the nature of God (Cone 2010, 67).

When looking at liberation theology from the Black perspective, it suggests that the story of the people of Israel is our story as a community:

Black theology says that as Creator, God identified with the oppressed people of Israel, participating in the bringing into being of this people; as Redeemer, God became the Oppressed One in order that all may be free from oppression; as Holy Spirit, God continues the work of liberation. (Cone 2010 67-68)

Cone confirms that the Black church is to continue to serve as an agent of liberation through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are commissioned to display God's identification with the struggle for freedom to the world through our leadership models.

Black theology as a subtopic of liberation theology calls us to question or consider the historical implications of Jesus in scripture. As Cone sees it, Black theology believes that Jesus is the Oppressed One whose existence was bound up with the oppressed in society (Cone 2010, 119). If we do not see Christ's identification with the poor, then we have missed the historical implications of who Christ was and is. His character as the Oppressed One is revealed throughout His life and ministry. This designation began at His birth because He was born in a stable and cradled in the manger. His humiliation began at his birth because "there was no room in the inn" (Cone 2010, 120-121).

Also, Jesus' baptism and temptation confirms that He is the Oppressed One because by being baptized, Jesus defines His existence with sinners because sinners were baptized. When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, the devil was seeking to divert Him from His mission with the poor, but Jesus refused because His being in the world was to confirm His identity as one of the humiliated, suffering poor (Cone 2010, 121-122).

Jesus' ministry reveals to us that He is the Oppressed One whose work included liberating humanity from inhumanity. Jesus' earthly ministry with the poor culminated in His death and resurrection. Jesus' death is a revelation of freedom and it suggests that those who live in an oppressed society do not have to behave as if death is final because Jesus has set us free from death which includes political tyranny, economic insecurity, and social ostracism (Cone 2010, 125).

Christian freedom rests in the fact that Christ has conquered death and all forms of oppression. When we speak of Christ, we speak of the liberation of the oppressed. Our liberation is ultimately His liberation (Cone 2010, 127). When we consider Jesus as Black, it calls us to notice how He fuels us with self-determination as a people. The blackness of Christ reveals that He is the Incarnate One. It also reveals that He threatens the structures that are both evil and oppressive. It calls us to be defiant to the oppressive structure around us. “We believe in the manifestation of the black Christ, and our encounter with Him defines our values . . . blacks are free to do what they have to do in order to affirm their humanity” (Cone 2010, 130). The Black Church must look very carefully at how we are presenting Christ because if we dismiss His suffering humanity then we have misrepresented Christ.

Womanist Theology

As a form of liberation theology, womanism is a way of reflection that places religious and moral perspectives at the center of its method (Townes, 2006 159). Womanist theology emerged as a corrective discipline to address the plight of global African diasporan women in general and of Black women in the United States in particular (Dugan 2014, 10). Womanist theology is also a religious conceptual framework which reconsiders and revises the traditions, practices, scriptures, and biblical interpretation with a special lens to empower and liberate African-American women in America (De La Torre 2013, 121).

The womanist theological perspective was designed to provide analysis and prescriptions for the eradication of oppression within the African American

community as well as the rest of humanity. The goal is to cultivate survival in the midst of a society that is oppressive, so womanist theology critiques the Black Church for how we have continued oppression towards Black women as well as other oppressed groups by way of our use of scripture, consideration of sexuality, gender roles and other issues that have been presented (Townes 2006, 157).

Womanists are serious about these conversations as we notice the slow genocide of Black people, which is a central focus of this perspective while maintaining integrity and accountability to Black communities (Townes 2006, 164). Womanist theology challenges the Black Church to examine oppressive messages that are conscious or unconscious, messages that include ageism, classism, colorism, homophobia, racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. Therefore, the Black Church is challenged to be taught on how it deals with the moral life through a concern for justice, the quality of life, and survival (Townes 2006, 165). As a result, when the Black Church examines this perspective and looks to implement it, it will give Black women and humanity an opportunity to receive as well as interpret God in their own context. This theological perspective takes the limits off and allows everyone to connect to the Gospel truth.

Womanists challenge how we allow the privileged to deny the existence of Jesus' servanthood by changing His poor status into a royal one (Townes 2006, 166).

As the womanist perspective was being used in practice by the Black Church, the faith of Black women was challenged as well as their love of God simply because Black women did not understand why God would cause Blacks to suffer (Cone 2011, 123). Therefore, the faith of African Americans emerged

from suffering which encouraged as well as contradicted their faith. While suffering challenged faith, it caused Black women in particular to reject White Christianity: “black women refused to believe that white Christianity was the true gospel” (Cone 2011, 133). This ideology led African American women as well as some men to embrace the idea that historically White Christianity was the dominant theology, but it is also the oppressive form of theology because of the support of lynching and segregation in some denominations.

However, the Black religious experience is shaped by the suffering of Christ on the cross. This religious experience of identifying with the suffering of Christ gave Black women who were part of the struggle the spiritual power to fight. “It was the black women’s faith that gave them the courage to face great danger in the black freedom movement” (Cone 2011, 148). It was the faith of Black women that empowered them to transform America which did not include just Black people but all of America. Womanist theologians such as Emilie Townes, Katie Cannon, and Delores Williams are inclusive and do not limit the fight to one oppressed group, but to all oppressed groups as well as the majority group as well. Black women throughout African American history not only preached the cross but bore the cross and sometimes died on it like Martin Luther King Jr. (Cone 2011, 148).

Cone affirms the fact that “The cross is the burden we must bear in order to attain freedom” (Cone 2011, 151). The reality is that we cannot separate the cross from the Christian experience. The cross is revealed through Black women who fought injustice during the civil rights movement which is one of the main

reasons why the womanist theological perspective was constructed. “God’s salvation is a liberating event in the lives of all who are struggling for survival and dignity in a world bent on denying their humanity” (Cone 2011, 151). Therefore, leadership models that produce fruit are tasked to dismantle oppressive views of Christianity by acknowledging the struggle of all people while experiencing the liberation that only Christ can offer.

Delores Williams challenges Black Theology to take the experiences of African American women seriously (Williams 2013, 127). Womanists are challenged to show black denominations the liability of using the Bible in an uncritical and self-serving way. Therefore, even though Black Theology deals with suffering and how God reveals Himself through suffering, Williams believes that Black women should not believe or focus on the fact that they can encounter God only through suffering (Williams 2013,129). However, she suggests that encountering God begins with prayer and faith.

According to Williams, the Black Church is invisible (Williams 2013, 181). She believes that it cannot be confined to a space or community, but we know it, when we see it. There are limitless implications as it relates to the Black Church. The Black Church has fruit because people are recovering from addiction and single parents are raising children alone with success (Williams 2013, 181). Those persons may not enter into a physical building, but the power of the Spirit is manifested in unlimited ways. Womanist theologians challenge limited ideologies and push towards all aspects of liberation (Williams 2013, 181).

While womanist theology has been formulated and implemented as a twentieth-century construct, African American women spoke to its concepts long before the term was coined. Julia Foote, who was the first woman ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, contributed to how women understand concepts of salvation and righteousness (Townes 2006, 162). Also, ethicist Marcia Y. Riggs wrote a book called *Awake, Arise, and Act: A Womanist Call for Black Liberation*. Riggs is also a member of the AME Zion Church. Her book addresses how integration has not had a universally positive effect on the Black communities, but essentially ushered in Black class division based upon individualism and competitiveness that is destroying the community instead of unifying it.

As a solution, Riggs believes that when there is a real assessment of human abilities to stand in solidarity and mutuality with one another then we will see renunciation, inclusivity and responsibility (Townes 2006, 169-170). Renunciation suggests that we give up our differences. Inclusivity suggests that we cross the lines of differences to struggle for justice. Responsibility suggests that we partner to uplift God's justice. Therefore, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church has been a supporter and forerunner in some cases of the womanist theological movement.

In the twenty-first century, as we are looking at leadership models that bear fruit in the context, we must use these principles of liberation which includes womanist theology. We will not see change in the Black Church and the Black community as well as all communities until we fight for justice which will liberate

humanity to experience the Kingdom of God. Therefore, we must advocate for the full partnership between men and women, support the care and nurture of children, respect the dignity and wisdom of the elderly, lift up the prophetic witness within Christianity, and maintain a relentless insistence that the church universal and its theological principles reflect a spirit of justice and love for all humanity and the rest of creation (Townes 2006, 175).

Pneumatology

The Holy Spirit is a powerful agent as it relates to fruitful leadership. Transformative models for leadership cannot be developed without the power of the Spirit as explained biblically in Galatians. The empowerment of the Spirit produces long-lasting fruit for Christians to become effective witnesses which includes leadership. Millard J. Erickson speaks to the theology of the Holy Spirit, dealing with the historical and practical implications while exposing some of the misunderstandings. There are many reasons why we should study the Holy Spirit but one reason is that the Spirit causes the Trinity to become personal to the believer (Erickson 2013, 772-773). Another reason why it is important to understand or study the Spirit is because through the work of the Holy Spirit we are able to feel God's presence within.

The Holy Spirit is God in the same fashion and to the same degree as the Father and the Son (Erickson 2013, 782). One way to confirm this notion is because scripture references the Holy Spirit in references to God. Erickson also shows us that the Holy Spirit possesses the attributes of God such as His

omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence (Erickson 2013, 782). There are other references that suggest the equality of the Trinity.

Erickson affirms that the Holy Spirit has a personality. He believes that the Holy Spirit is a person, not an impersonal force, meaning that we can have a relationship with the Holy Spirit as we do with other persons of the Trinity (Erickson 2013, 784). When we look at the Holy Spirit, we must recognize that we can rely on the Spirit for empowerment. The Holy Spirit releases gifts upon believers wisely, as well as gives understanding because the Holy Spirit is closely identified with people and the work that they do for the Lord (Erickson 2013, 784). The Holy Spirit engages in moral actions and ministries that can only be manifested through a person such as teaching, regenerating, searching, speaking, interceding, commanding, testifying, guiding, illuminating, and revealing. The truth presented leads us to one meaningful conclusion that, “The Holy Spirit is a person, not a force, and the person is God” (Erickson 2013, 786).

The Holy Spirit also invokes the miraculous to be made known in the life of the believers as well as the Church (Erickson 2013, 803). Some of those ways to invoke the miraculous is through gifts such as faith, prophecy, knowledge, wisdom, casting out demons, and speaking in tongues. These gifts did not cease but are still in operation which fuel our leadership models. Erickson reveals to us that when it relates to these miraculous gifts, “He bestows them sovereignly; he alone determines the recipients” (Erickson 2013, 802). When God chooses us to be recipients, we are given clearance to use those gifts within our leadership models under His guidance. So, we must be submissive to how the Holy Spirit

seeks to control our lives. “God frequently performs miraculous works without involving human agents, whatever be the gift, it is edification of the church and the glorification of God” (Erickson 2013, 803) because He is indeed the agent who works through us.

Jurgen Moltmann expresses that the spirit of life is the Spirit of God. Life happens because of the Spirit’s work. “The gift and the presence of the Holy Spirit is the greatest and most wonderful thing which we can experience” (Moltmann 1997, 10). When the Spirit is present, we are able to experience God through our lives. As leaders, we are compelled to petition and plea for the Holy Spirit to come. When we pray for the Holy Spirit, the response is the Spirit’s coming and remaining, its outpouring and its indwelling (Moltmann 1997,11). When God releases an outpouring of His Spirit, it is considered the outpouring and flowing Godhead.

Jesus was conceived, baptized, performed miracles, and resurrected through the power of the Spirit (Moltmann 1997, 15). Christ’s history in the Spirit begins at His birth and ends with His resurrection. Then Christ sends the Spirit upon the community of His people and is present in the Spirit. The Spirit of God becomes the Spirit of Christ. The Christ sent in the Spirit becomes Christ the sender of the Spirit (Moltmann 1997, 15). Therefore, through Christ He sends the Spirit of life.

The Holy Spirit empowers and implements God’s mission. “God’s mission is nothing less than the sending of the Holy Spirit from the Father through the Son into this world so that this world should not perish” (Moltmann 1997, 19). The

mission of God contributes to the spread of Christianity and the expansion of the Kingdom of God, but it also includes building up a universal culture of life that resists any type of death such as oppression towards the marginalized. A culture of life contributes to a liberation approach to ministry through the power of the Spirit. Therefore, “the Holy Spirit’s wave of salvation embraces the whole of life and everything living and cannot be confined to religion and spirituality” (Moltmann 1997, 22). The Holy Spirit renews God’s people, renews all who live, and renews the face of the earth. “The Spirit of God is no respecter of social distinctions; it puts an end to them” (Moltmann 1997, 23). Men and women are equally endowed within the mission of God by way of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God serves as a vitalizing energy. “... the Holy Spirit is the source of life, the origin of the torrent of energy” (Moltmann 1997,69). In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the eternal God comes to share in our mortal, sick and disabled life, and we have a share in the eternal life of God. This mutual fellowship is a wellspring of strength (Moltmann 1997, 69). We cannot experience life in the Body of Christ without the inspiration of the Spirit. When we experience the strength and energy that the Spirit brings, it impacts our leadership models.

“The Spirit is more than just one of God’s gifts among others; the Holy Spirit is the unrestricted presence of God in which our life wakes up, becomes wholly and entirely living, and is endowed with the energies of life” (Moltmann 1997, 54). Moltmann affirms that the Spirit is unrestricted and contributes to life holistically. In other words, life happens when the Spirit is present. Therefore,

even the Church will experience life when the Spirit is activated which brings no restrictions and true liberation can come.

Historical Foundation

African Methodism was birthed out of oppression and provided a ministry of liberation for African Americans. Therefore, a survey of the history of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church will offer insight into its foundation of liberation and how it impacts fruitful ministry.

James Varick is the noted founder of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, a movement founded in Harlem, New York in 1796. The AME Zion Church is a movement that has borne fruit for African Methodism throughout its history, and James Varick was seen to be a fruitful leader historically (Walls 1974, 30). Varick had a liberation lens because his mother was a slave while his father was Dutch and may have been the slave master that impregnated Varick's mother. Varick was considered to be an abolitionist, scholar, and organizer that took advantage of the opportunities presented to blacks at that time because he was raised in the middle of the eighteenth century which suggests that slavery was still a reality (Hoggard 1998, 364).

James Varick along with thirty other blacks withdrew from the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church after multiple insults, as it was apparent that they were not able to worship at their pleasure (Hoggard 1998, 364). Varick was a shoemaker by trade but was holding religious meetings in secret in his home since was licensed to preach by the John Street Church before he withdrew from that assembly. In 1800, this group who worshiped with Varick built its own church

in lower Manhattan. The group named it Zion, and Varick preached the first sermon on July 30, 1800 (Hoggard 1998, 364).

In Bishop William Jacob Walls' book, *The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: The Reality of the Black Church*, he asserts that "Varick led, influenced, and structured the movement that blossomed into the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in America" (Walls 1974, 44). Walls believes that Varick's unwavering leadership through the turbulent waters of establishing a new denomination led to his elevation to the bishopric (Walls 1974, 44).

The movement began with Varick holding separate meetings for African Americans in his home as a protest over dissatisfaction with John Street Church. Varick was one of Zion's first three licensed preachers and eventually became one of the first three people of African descent ordained in the state of New York in 1806 (Walls 1974, 48). After his licensing, Varick led the movement for separation from the John Street Church, which had oppressed African Americans by keeping them from worshiping with whites and denying ordination to African Americans who acknowledged a call to preach.

First, eight predominantly Black classes (small groups), two of which were all male classes, expressed their grievance with how they were treated at John Street Church. Secondly, this group received permission to hold separate meetings by Bishop Francis Asbury and the movement was officially launched in October 1796 (Walls 1974, 47-48). Varick and the eight classes refused to live and worship according to the oppressive standards and ideologies that were presented towards black during this time period.

Varick also encouraged his followers to build their first church in 1799 (Walls 1974, 88).

In the year 1796, when the Colored members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York became increased, and feeling a desire for the privilege of holding meetings of their own, where they might have an opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts among themselves, and thereby be more useful one to the other, a few of the most intelligent of our brethren obtained permission from Bishop Francis Asbury to hold meetings by themselves, in the intervals of the regular preaching hours of our white brethren, in the best manner they could. (Rush 1843, 9)

In 1820, Black Methodists formed several churches in the Northeast but the Methodist Episcopal Church, which is now the United Methodist Church, still required white pastors to supervise their worship due to the racist restrictions. Therefore, several Black churches including Zion met with Rev. Varick presiding to form their own denomination (Hoggard 1998, 376). In July 1822, Rev. Varick was ordained an elder and the church known as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church convened and elected Rev. Varick as its first Bishop. Bishop Varick presided over five annual conferences of the New York Conference (Hoggard 1998, 376). He died in 1827 and his ashes are buried in a crypt in the basement of AME Zion Church in Harlem, New York, which became known as the Mother Church of the denomination.

History records through Walls' research that the foundation of Zion Methodism was not always easy, but "Varick stood like a rock amid some raging storms and brought the old ship of Zion through a series of crises to freedom" (Walls 1974, 42). Varick is seen as a transformative leader by those who followed him during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The AME Zion Church was known as a progressive movement because it sought to create

an equitable church environment for black membership to grow in God's grace and discipleship. Varick had a very revolutionary spirit. If he as well as the classes remained under the Methodist Episcopal Church, they would have not been able to become a movement providing liberation.

Therefore, it was necessary for Blacks to separate from the John Street Church because the revolutionary spirit expressed and informed by the gospel brought relief in lieu of the limitations placed upon Blacks in that context. The AME Zion Church was described by McKenith as, "A movement providing freedom of self-expression, religious, and social determination" (McKenith 2018, 19). Bradley makes a similar observation:

The AME Zion Church not only was foremost in the carrying on of this struggle for freedom but appears to have been the leader along this line. At one time or another every great racial advocate of freedom was a member of this organization. (Bradley 1956, 107)

All along the Mason Dixon line and farthest west in Ohio and Indiana, Zion church members and their friends became beacon points of hope to the freed slave. However, even though the movement was to provide freedom, the movement had become exclusive to service only Africans or those of African descent while only men were chosen to be leaders (Moore 1884, 22). As a result, this exclusive history has limited the reach of the AME Zion church within the changing dynamics of the culture today.

The history of what is understood to be the Mother Church in African Methodism is truly a remarkable story of American history. Mother AME Zion Church, which is referred to as "Mother Zion," played a critical role in every aspect of African American life in early New York City (Hoggard 1998, 574).

Mother Zion sought to improve the condition of Blacks. This church was one of the earliest and vocal opponents against slavery while championing the Abolitionist Movement. The “Freedom Journal,” the first African American owned newspaper was published and operated from the basement of the church (Hoggard 1998, 574).

Sojourner Truth transferred her membership from John Street Church to Zion Church. It was at the altar of Mother Zion that she changed her name from Isabella Brumfree and was united with her sisters who had been separated from her during slavery (Hoggard 1998, 574). Frederick Douglas delivered his trial discourse (first sermon) in the basement of the Mother Zion and was part of the Abolitionist Movement as well. Therefore, Mother Zion birthed fighters so that liberation could come to Blacks (Hoggard 1998, 576). The reason why this is very significant is because Sojourner Truth was an advocate for civil rights and women’s rights in the nineteenth century which gave her an opportunity to meet President Lincoln. She also became an itinerant preacher leading powerful revivals (Michals 2015, 1). Frederick Douglas was a social reformer and abolitionist which opened the door for him to become the national leader of the Abolitionist Movement (Sundstroms 2017, 3). These two members of the AME Zion Church are examples that Zion produces fighters for liberation.

During the nineteenth century, Mother Zion experienced explosive and excited growth (Hoggard 1998, 575). The church moved to Harlem from lower Manhattan during the Harlem Renaissance so the church played an important

role in a new Black community, not just as a religious institution but as a cultural and civic institution as well (Hoggard 1998, 577).

By the twentieth century, Mother Zion had outgrown its facility so in 1919, a black architect named George W. Foster designed a cathedral house of worship and in 1925, the congregation moved into its present location at West 137th Street in Harlem. Under the pastorates of Bishop James Brown, Dr. B.C. Robeson, and Bishop Alfred G. Dunston, the church grew to over six thousand members. When Dr. George McMurray pastored the church, they continued with a social agenda to build the James Varick Community Center to service the needs of that community (Hoggard 1998, 576).

The members of the AME Zion Church have taken on the spirit of Varick and have engaged in public service to bring radical change in their communities across the United States. For example, Rev. Dr. Bernard Richardson is the dean of the Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel at Howard University. The late Rev. John Kinard was the director of the Anacostia Museum, Smithsonian Institute. Congressman Louis Stokes served on the U.S. House of Representatives for the 11th District, Ohio. The late Rev. Dr. Thaddeus Garrett was the presidential advisor to Presidents Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, and George Bush (Hoggard 1998, 570-571).

As we moved towards the twenty-first century, the seeds planted by Varick continued to blossom. Churches in the AME Zion Church took on the spirit of Varick such as Simon Temple in Fayetteville, NC (Mullen 2020, 2) and St. Stephen Church in Asbury Park, NJ (Goudsward 2019, 1), investing in

businesses in their communities that transformed the culture of their context and provided opportunities for jobs. Wesley Center in Pittsburgh, PA founded an after-school program that positively impacted at risk youth in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, teaching them job readiness skills and how to dress appropriately, as well as providing tutoring and extracurricular activities to keep them off the street (Courier 2014, 1-3). Varick Memorial in New Haven, CT (Taylor 2016, 3) and Shaw Temple in Smyrna, GA (Child Care Center 2019, 1-2) founded Christian Academies that taught Christian principles as well as powerful pedagogies that impacted the minds of Black children.

Many pastors took on the spirit of Varick and served on the school board, city council, and even became political leaders. Also, pastors led their congregations during the Civil Rights Movement to fight against injustice and even participated in peaceful protest. Some churches even hosted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other Civil Rights leaders during the struggle for freedom (Unks 2019, 1). Most recently, the Black Lives Matter movement impacted many of our communities such as in Baltimore, MD with the Freddy Gray shooting (Blake 2015, 1) and St. Louis, MO with the Michael Brown shooting (Van Buren 2014, 1-3). Those churches directly impacted by the unrest in their communities were active agents of change and reconciliation which continues the vision of our founder, James Varick who fought for injustice.

Fruitful ministry did not end with Mother Zion but other churches such as First Church, Brooklyn NY, Metropolitan, Hartford CT, John Wesley, Washington DC, St. Paul, Detroit, MI, Wesley Temple, Akron, OH, and Little Rock, Charlotte,

NC had memberships well over one thousand parishioners due to the fruitfulness of ministry taking place in their context (Stewart 2011, 99-100). The former Full Gospel AME Zion Church in Temple Hills, MD was one of the largest churches that the AME Zion Church has ever produced. This particular church had national acclaim and significance. This church had over twenty thousand members during its prime years of ministry but once the Church split and that pastor decided to remove himself from the church, it caused the AME Zion Church to suffer (Harris 1999, 1-3). The only churches that have one thousand members or more in the AME Zion Church now are Shaw Temple, Smyrna, GA, Simon Temple, Fayetteville, NC, Varick Memorial, New Haven, CT and Greater Centennial, Mount Vernon, NY which is a significant decrease throughout the years.

Conclusion

In conclusion, fruitful leadership models are fueled by the Biblical, Theological, and Historical Foundations presented. Each foundation gives us something to consider or even reconsider as God is calling the Church forward in the twenty-first century. Biblically, John 15:1-11 and Galatians 5:22-25 suggest that total dependence on God and His Spirit creates authentic community, discipleship and even leadership that produces fruit that will last. Theologically, Liberation Theology which includes Black Theology and Womanist Theology as well as Pneumatology informs transformative leadership models. Each theological perspective enhances the tools that should be implemented in leadership practices to produce long-lasting fruit.

Historically, the research suggests that Varick was indeed a change agent who fought against injustice which birthed a movement filled with change agents. Churches and leaders within the AME Zion Church have taken on the mantle of Varick, seeking to take his vision to the next level. Chapter Three will explore the contemporary literature which discusses various leadership models within the church that have the ability to produce fruit.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Transformative leadership is a very important aspect to the growth and survival of the Church. The contemporary aspect of this project highlights various leadership models that will assist leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church to become fruitful in their leadership approaches. It also assesses the type of culture that will create an environment for fruitful models to be at work.

The current culture has become an alarming threat to the Church universal, specifically African Methodism in the twenty-first century. For the pastor or faith leader in today's church, the questions remain: What happens next? What are we supposed to do? What are we lacking? How are we missing the mark? What can we do about it? I believe that transformative leadership is one of the major solutions to the dilemma at hand. We need to discover leadership models that will "bear fruit" to positively impact the Kingdom of God moving forward. Leadership models also need to be discovered that will empower all generations to be engaged in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Then we need to discover what type of leader can lead the Church in the shift that it needs to grow and thrive in the future. Therefore, the following literature review seeks to address best practices in leadership so that transformation and "fruit" can bring forth results for the Kingdom of God. The review will assess leadership from both the secular and spiritual perspectives, identifying ideas from both a Black Church perspective and the Wesleyan tradition.

Secular Leadership Practices

Writing in the Harvard Business Review, Daniel Goleman suggests practices from a secular perspective that are seen as best practices in leadership (Goleman 2011, 1). We will assess some of those practices and seek to bring the perspectives into a church context. There are secular models which can impact the sacred in a positive way. Some of the secular approaches also can enhance our administrative practices as we seek to become stewards of the Church (Goleman 2011, 1).

Daniel Goleman, a science journalist and psychologist, points out that effective leaders have a high degree of emotional intelligence (Goleman 2011, 1). Oftentimes, we have based leadership on having certain skills, training, and the ability to come up with smart ideas. However, Goleman speaks to the ideology of emotional intelligence. “Emotional Intelligence is a group of five skills that enable the best leaders to maximize their own and their followers’ intelligence” (Goleman 2011, 3).

As explained by Goleman, the skills of emotional intelligence are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (Goleman 2011, 3). Self-awareness is the ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions, and drives (Goleman, 2011, 6). He explains that people with self-awareness recognize how their feelings impact themselves, others, and job performance. However, leaders should always do self-reflection to see how their moods, emotions, and drives are impacting leadership.

Self-regulation is an ongoing inner conversation that prevents us from being prisoners of our feelings (Goleman 2011, 11). It also means that you control impulses and negative feelings. Self-regulation is the ability to push beyond disagreements and to always act appropriately. One reason why many do not trust a leader is because some have not embraced or sharpened the skill of self-regulation (Goleman 2011, 12).

Effective leaders are motivated to achieve beyond their own expectations as well as the expectations of others (Goleman 2011, 14). This type of effectiveness has nothing to do with external factors but it is motivated by an inward drive. Some are influenced by external factors such as a salary or status. In contrast, effective leaders are motivated from within. It is not about status, power or position but it is about the ability to achieve. Therefore, transformative leaders in every context have to tap into the inward motivation that Goleman speaks about (Goleman 2011, 15).

Goleman describes empathy as thoughtfully considering the feelings of others in the process of making intelligent decisions (Goleman, 2011, 16). Effective leaders are empathetic because leadership is not a one man or one woman response. One has to be sensitive to the feelings of others when making decisions. A leader is not a leader without the intentional support of others who catch the vision. In order for a vision to be a reality, a leader must be empathetic. When the feelings of others are not considered, then it will discourage others to feel included and a part of the plan. Therefore, empathy is key to transformative leadership (Goleman 2011, 17).

The last aspect of emotional intelligence as Goleman outlines is the ability to practice appropriate social skills. Social skills can be understood as friendliness with a purpose where you are moving people in the direction that you desire (Goleman 2011, 19). It is beyond just being friendly but there is some type of intent. Leaders must develop social skills that would motivate people into action. There have been leaders who have not had this skill and it has diminished their ability to serve. Effectiveness rests in this social skill dynamic and success would be the result (Goleman 2011, 19).

John Kotter, who was a professor of leadership at Harvard University, points out that leadership is different from management, but suggests there should be an even balance of leadership and management which positively impacts one's ability to lead (Kotter, 2011, 37). He reveals that this balance in leadership poses a challenge. "Management is about coping with complexity . . . Leadership . . . is about coping with change" (Kotter 2011, 38). Management involves planning and budgeting while leadership involves setting a direction. Management includes administration and staffing while leadership includes aligning people (Kotter 2011, 38). Management brings about control and problem solving while leadership brings motivation as Goleman states in his article about Emotional Intelligence (Kotter 2011, 38). However, the challenge is bridging the gap between the two because they have the ability to complement one another.

While there are various types of leaders, Rooke, who is considered to be a systems thinker, and Tolbert, who was a leadership professor at Boston College recognize that what differentiates leaders is not their philosophy, style, or

personality; it is their internal “action logic” (Rooke and Tolbert 2011, 137). Action logic is defined by Rooke and Tolbert as how leaders interpret their surroundings and react when their power is challenged. Understanding one’s “action logic” can improve the ability to lead (Rooke and Tolbert 2011, 137). They outline the seven action logics as follows: the opportunist, diplomat, expert, achiever, individualist, strategist, and alchemist (Rooke and Tolbert 2011, 137).

In Rooke and Tolbert’s framework, the opportunist tries to “win any way possible” by being self-oriented and manipulative. The diplomat avoids conflict due to wanting to belong and does not rock the boat. The expert rules by logic and expertise while using hard data to prove a point. The achiever meets strategic goals while promoting team work. The individualist is very radical and operates in unconventional ways. The strategist generates organizational and personal change by being highly collaborative. The alchemist generates social transformation by being revolutionary (Rooke and Tolbert 2011, 140).

The literature suggests that the strategist and the alchemist are highly effective leaders. “Strategists deal with conflict more comfortably. . .they’re better at handling people’s instinctive resistance to change” (Rooke and Tolbert 2011, 149). Strategist are highly collaborative which confirms what Goleman says about empathetic leaders. With being highly collaborative, they are able to deal with conflict more comfortably and are able to tackle any resistance to change (Rooke and Tolbert 2011, 149).

Alchemists are change agents who focus on renewal and reinvention. These persons are very creative and “out of the box.” “Alchemists are typically

charismatic and extremely aware individuals who live by high moral standards. They focus intensely on truth” (Rooke and Tolbert, 2011, 150).

In summary, the Harvard Business Review challenges our thought processes and implementation strategies as it relates to leadership even within the Church context. Goleman speaks to emotional intelligence and how that impacts leadership practices. Kotter then speaks to administrative and management practices that enhance the organizational processes. Then Rooke and Tolbert outline the “Seven Transformations of Leadership.” All of these secular approaches are both meaningful and serve as best practices. In the next section, we will look at authors who speak about Church Leadership, who also use business principles.

Church Leadership Practices

“Leadership is essential. You may have plenty of funding, a full-time team . . .but if your leadership skills are not developed, you will not be successful” (Stetzer 2003, 94). As Chan notes, being a Christian leader in any organization is one of the most difficult jobs in the world – full of risks, strains, and challenges for the leader and his family – but it is also the one that offers the greatest hope to make a difference both now and for eternity (Chan 2015, 30).

Lovett Weems is a professor at Wesley Theological Seminary and a leadership expert who speaks volumes to the study of Church leadership in his various publications. We will begin our exploration of leadership within the church with his writings. He explains his view:

Church leadership is never solely about personal authority, a leader’s style or a management process but rather about the faithful future of faith

traditions and communities. Leadership becomes a channel of God's grace as we help God's people discern to what God is calling them and help them take that next faithful step. (Weems 2010, 1)

For Weems, church leadership is theological, not personal. The goal is to be sensitive to God's vision in lieu of seeking personal desires. The end result is that church leadership is a calling from God and we respond to it because of His love and grace towards us (Weems 2010, 2).

Leaders within the Church must answer the calling and strive to be obedient to what God wants to do. God's vision for the world and the Church will keep the Kingdom of God healthy and flourishing when we are submissive. Part of the dilemma that we are facing points to the fact that persons have personal agendas and do not align themselves with God's agenda. God's agenda will flourish while humanity's agenda will fail (Weems 2010, 5). Weems speaks to the integral part of prayer in the process of being the type of leader that God ultimately desires. God, the Church, and the context give authority to every leader to go forth and bear fruit for the glory of God (Weems, 2010, 7).

Weems confirms that management and administration are both a part of leadership as Kotter suggested in the previous section. However, Weems believes that leadership growing out of administration and management has been proven inadequate (Weems 2010, 13). He believes that the Church needs new wisdom as it relates to leadership because of the changing dynamics of culture. Management and administration are necessary but there must be vision and values in this context which confirms the fact that "Genuine leadership is always value-driven leadership" (Weems, 2010, 13).

As a result of this value-driven approach, effective leadership includes vision, a team, integrity and culture. A church must discover and articulate a shared vision. A church must also build a team who can make the vision a reality. The church and the leader must be in one accord when moving towards the vision. The church must also embody the vision throughout the culture of the Body (Weems 2010, 19). This is one of the practices of transformative leadership that will breed lasting results for generations to come in answer to the question: Where are we going and how do we get there?

Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby have created a guide to spiritual leadership that recognizes how effective leadership has the ability to move people on to God's agenda. One important way of moving people to what God wants them to do in the earth realm is building effective teams. "Great leaders multiply their efforts by developing teams . . . this must be one of a leader's top priorities" (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 294). Leaders must develop a dynamic culture because outstanding tasks cannot be accomplished in isolation. When vision is executed, it is supported and funded by a team that is committed to the work at hand. Blackaby and Blackaby encourage that a mission that brings challenge requires a chosen team to ensure that the mission is accomplished (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 296). Teams will bring much diversity which includes perspective, skills, and knowledge so building an effective team will influence fruitful leadership.

Healthy Leadership Practices

One phenomenon that we consistently ignore in the Church is mental health, as leadership practices should also take into account the leader's mental as well as emotional stability. Leaders have to be emotionally healthy before they can be the catalyst to lead ministry. Transformative leaders must assess if they are emotionally healthy or not. As long-time pastor Peter Scazerro, who developed Emotional Healthy Discipleship understands, emotionally unhealthy leaders have both emotional and spiritual deficits that impact every aspect of life (Scazerro 2015, 25). Deficits are caused by the lack of awareness which impacts leaders both emotionally and socially when relating with others. Unhealthy leaders have low self-awareness, prioritize ministry over marriage or singleness, do more works than actually cultivating a relationship with God, and experience the lack of a sabbath (Scazerro, 2015, 32).

In his writing and teaching, Scazerro challenges leaders to become self-aware when it comes to their emotional health which speaks to the secular models stated earlier by Goleman regarding emotional intelligence. Emotional health impacts how one leads and offers a leadership model that would bear fruit. So we must guard against the warning signs and when we do notice the signs in our own lives, then we need to seek out the help needed (Scazerro 2015, 40).

Scazerro also suggests that leaders need to face their shadow. A shadow is a reality that every leader has which is untamed emotions, less than pure motives and thoughts that influence and shape behavior (Scazerro 2015, 55). The encouragement is that we are more than our shadow but we have to

address our shadow. Scazerri also shares that when we do not address our shadow as leaders it will undermine our potential, limit our ability to serve, and can cause us to become numb to the shadow of others (Scazerro 2015, 65). Yet when we face our shadow we can break its control over us and we can discover the hidden power when we address our shadow (Scazerro, 2015, 68). When being courageous to face our shadow, we must remain connected to Christ and follow His leadership. Scazerro recognizes that through the power of Christ we can tame our feelings by naming them (Scazerro, 2015, 70).

Scazerro teaches that confession is the key to our deliverance when breaking the power of the shadow. Examining the impact of past trauma or experiences is helpful as well. We also must address the messages that we have internalized that have a powerful impact on how we function (Scazerro 2015, 75). Seeking counsel from trusted sources can help to address the shadows in our lives. Leaders must face the shadow so that they can bear good fruit in their leadership.

Scazerro recognizes that effective leaders practice a sabbath. From a biblical perspective, a sabbath is a twenty-four hour block where we stop, enjoy, rest, and contemplate with God (Scazerro 2015, 144). Too often leaders work and never take time to discipline themselves to pursue a true sabbath. Oftentimes leaders are burned out doing the work of ministry, so a sabbath is necessary. As leaders we have to stop what we are doing at times. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of ministry, we have to take intentional time to stop. It is also important to discover what we each find enjoyable and be intentional to

engage in those activities. Rest is important via getting enough sleep and taking meaningful time to relax (Scazerro 2015, 145). Scazerro also suggests the need for contemplation with God. Sabbath is designed to draw nigh to the power and presence of God. In the midst of contemplation we can hear from God more intimately and succinctly (Scazzero 2015, 146).

Looking at church leadership from another perspective, Ronald Richardson uses a Family Systems Theoretical approach to give best practices for creating a healthier church through leadership. Richardson would agree with Scarzerro that emotional maturity is imperative when it comes to leadership, and explains that wisdom is what the Bible refers to as maturity (Richardson 1996, 80). Richardson mentions that wisdom has to do with a person's ability to effectively use what they know. Also wise people have a better sense of self (Richardson 1996, 85). A leader who is wise is able to make appropriate decisions in the midst of anxious situations. Wisdom also opens the door to adaptability and flexibility in congregations because in order to be a healthy church, leaders must have the ability to adapt and be flexible (Richardson 1996, 86). This practice cannot happen without emotionally mature leaders.

As Richardson observes, the leader's main job in a congregation is to create an emotional atmosphere where peace and tranquility exist (Richardson 1996, 173). Without a peaceful environment, it would be difficult for leaders to operate and impact congregations. As Richardson notes, "Calmer churches usually have calmer leaders" (Richardson 1996, 173). One of the ways to foster a calm congregation is seeking to understand. In the midst of tension and

confusion, leaders need to assess how the people affected are thinking and processing what is going on around them. It is not appropriate to preach and press our point of view (Richardson, 1996, 174). We also have to show people that we really care through objectivity: “. . . if they believe you are just as interested and not trying to do anything to them . . . they will become less defensive and more open” (Richardson 1996, 175).

Richardson also speaks to finding the humor in the midst of difficulty. Laughter decreases anxious feelings. “To be able to feel a lightness about a situation, rather than being weighed down by its gravity, gives us a less anxious presence” (Richardson 1996, 176). Laughter does not minimize a situation but it gives the encouragement and the drive to “trust the process” which impacts those who follow the leader. It also adds to the objectivity conversation that was presented earlier. Leaders must lead followers to discover the humor which connects followers to the leader in an intentional way which leads to a healthy church (Richardson 1996, 177).

Scazerro and Richardson present practical truths and coping skills which empower leaders to focus on their emotional health, a large component of transformative leadership. Leaders are challenged to take their emotional health seriously so that they are able to lead and impact the lives of others.

Fruitful Leadership Practices

As Berlin and Weems understand, “. . . church leaders are called to be faithful and fruitful” (Berlin and Weems 2011, 19). This is the biblical mandate presented in scripture. In order to have a fruitful ministry, one must be found

faithful. Fruitfulness begins when churches are not so focused on activities but they consider the outcomes of what they are planning. Church activities should align with the vision and mission for the Church which open the door to fruitful ministry (Berlin and Weems 2011, 19). Sometimes within the Church we have events and plans with no direction. Where there is no direction there will be chaos and confusion, and it is difficult to discern the original intent. Weems and Berlin discuss a “so that” phenomenon (Berlin and Weems 2011, 30). For example, the Small Group Ministry will have a movie night so that we can engage with our community more intimately, so that we can advance the Kingdom of God more intentionally. This model shapes ministry within the Church to become fruitful with results. There must be a plan that will lead to positive outcomes, “so that [practices] can help churches think in a new way so that all they do is shaped toward mission and results in fruitfulness” (Berlin and Weems 2011, 33).

“The essential element for fruitful church leadership is the discernment and implementation of God’s vision for a community of faith . . . Fruitful leadership is possible only through the power of God” (Berlin and Weems 2011, 36). Spirit-led individuals have an ear to God’s ultimate vision for the Church. Leaders must be filled with the Spirit to be effective and fruitful in ministry. Our role as spiritual leaders is to implement God’s vision and not our own. Some leaders try to advance their own agenda but God’s agenda will always work and be fulfilling. Pastors must humble themselves and become open to hear God’s vision and then seek to bring it forth in the community. God births vision and we carry it out. Our role is, “to catch a glimpse of what God wanted to accomplish

and then understand the role we . . . need to undertake if God's will was to be achieved" (Berlin and Weems 2011, 39).

The reality is that God's vision for the church was upon it from the beginning and it will be carried out today and forevermore. Leaders in established settings must see the possibility of God's vision of fruitfulness being manifested. Those who are leading in established ministries must be sensitive to the story that is already at work (Berlin and Weems 2011, 47). When you do this it shows that you are joining them in the journey that God has them on. As Weems tells us, "the good news is that the congregation's own story and values can often act as a lever that has the power to encourage these members to move toward the future" (Weems 2011, 49). At this point, established churches must move from mission to vision because oftentimes when they have succeeded in fulfilling the mission, they become complacent but establishing vision will point them towards the future that God is calling them to fulfill.

Fruitful leaders must pay attention to the harvest after having planted and watered within established settings (Weems 2011, 50). "Fruitful leaders long for the transformation of the church in areas that evidence Christian discipleship" (Weems 2011, 98). However, we must realize the reality that "the harvest may not come immediately but that does not mean that good seed was not planted" (Weems 2011, 98). Also, Weems helps us understand that God's fruitfulness is unpredictable. Sometimes what was planned for was not an outcome but "God has worked to accomplish a different and often greater outcome" (Weems 2011,

99). So fruitful leaders must expect a harvest and believe that it will come to pass at the appointed time.

Culture (personalities, mindsets, values, morale, atmosphere) is a powerful phenomenon which cannot be ignored or diminished within the context of any organization. “Culture – not vision or strategy – is the most important factor of any organization . . . it shapes the morale, teamwork, effectiveness and outcomes” (Chand 2011, 2). Too often we think that vision is the most important factor within organizations but vision cannot be implemented effectively in a culture that does not embrace it. This phenomenon even speaks to the Kingdom. The Kingdom cannot be manifested in the Church context until the culture is ready to handle it. Chand says that culture is usually unnoticed, unspoken, and unexamined (Chand 2011, 8). It also determines how people respond to vision and leadership. Culture is often noticed in the midst of negative experiences. Culture is also hard to change but change results in multiplied benefits (Chand 2011, 10-16).

As stated in the previous paragraphs, there is much power as it relates to culture and there are different types of cultures. Chand outlines five different types of culture in his book, *Cracking Your Church's Culture Code*. An inspiring culture is when the leaders give a clear direction along with trust and respect. There is a teamwork approach when it relates to inspiring cultures. Creativity is welcomed, expectations are realistically high, consistent celebrations of success occur, and a plan to retrain and replace persons who cannot foster a positive environment is in place (Chand 2011, 22-23).

Accepting cultures include a very positive atmosphere, but there are some stressors and unresolved issues within this culture. However, this culture is very supportive and communicates well. On the other hand, this type of culture avoids difficult decisions. People love to work in the accepting culture but when persons get behind the scenes, they end up disappointed (Chand 2011, 24-25).

A third type of culture as defined by Chand is a stagnant culture, which allows much tolerance but there is no trust and respect within the culture. Small problems quickly escalate in a stagnant culture. The overall morale and drive of the culture goes down in a stagnant environment (Chand 2011, 26-27). Many churches maybe operating within a stagnant culture which contributes to fruitlessness.

Discouraging cultures as explored by Chand only promote those at the “top” which leads to persons within the organization protecting themselves and being on guard, seeking to survive power struggles. Wrong solutions and analysis are used to remedy the problem. The discouraging culture crushes vision by having an “I don’t care” attitude (Chand 2011, 29-30).

As a final model, toxic cultures have a closed system type of approach where ideas from the outside are not supported. Fear becomes the motivational factor and battles are encouraged. Ethical considerations are blinded in this type of culture (Chand 2011, 31-32).

Chand’s model offers a lens reflected upon the Christian church and upon African Methodism in particular. When these negative cultures are being displayed in our organization, crushing the Kingdom Culture that God expects

from the Church, how can transformative leadership bring these dysfunctions to light? By confronting the discouraging and toxic cultures plaguing our denominations, inspiring and accepting cultures can create an environment where the Kingdom of God can be advanced (Chand 2011, 110).

Chand speaks of how culture influences as well as controls vision, which then controls leadership models. Fruitful leadership models will not work unless the culture is prepared to embrace the model, for as he advises, “To create a new culture, you have to destroy the old one” (Chand 2011 113). This process is challenging because it involves intentional as well as risky processes. It can also be a painful process but is necessary. People are mostly resistant to change when they are used to a certain culture but in order for a Kingdom Culture to come to the forefront which creates an environment for fruitful leadership, changes should be made to the old culture which makes space for a new culture (Chand 2011, 120).

Changing a culture is costly, as Chand knows, for it requires clear thinking, concerted effort, enormous courage, and tenacious consistency (Chand 2011, 137). Within the church context, vision can become stale as well as irrelevant and a culture that becomes stale as well can be ineffective. So “Churches must re-dream the dream or discover a new compelling vision for their existence” (Chand 2011, 145). In order for a Kingdom Culture to become evident in the Church, we as the Body of Christ must change vehicles (Chand 2011, 147). Some of our methods need to be changed so that we can become formed

into the image of Christ. Therefore, re-dreaming and rediscovering is a vital part of the process.

Wesleyan Leadership Practices

Having looked at secular models of leadership as well as concepts that have been developed within the Church to affect change, we move to the roots of the Methodist experience to further discuss leadership practices. In this way, the Wesleyan family must lead in the Wesleyan spirit. African Methodism has both theological and historical roots in the Wesleyan movement, and so we are challenged to lead in the same manner, with the people, in an inclusive manner, and in ways that can be seen as radical. Wesleyans also value discipline and community, as well as seeking the basics of the faith.

Contemporary writers help us to recognize that leading in the Wesleyan spirit involves the people (Weems 1999, 13). John Wesley wanted to meet the needs of the people, which included those in the church and those outside of the church who were considered “common people.” Leading in the Wesleyan tradition means truly loving people (Weems 1999, 13). As such, the leaders are not manipulated by the people but have a genuine concern for them when making decisions for their spiritual well-being. Weems also in a later conversation confirms that leadership begins with the people that God has given us (Weems 2017, 1). While it appears obvious, we must still remember: there would be no one to lead without people.

Leading in the Wesleyan spirit also suggests that we follow the people so there is ministry where they are. As Weems notes, “Methodists chose to go

where the people were moving” (Weems 1999, 22). As the country expanded, people were moving west so Methodism spread as the people were moving. That model of development reminds us that fruitful leadership includes being sensitive to where the people are going geographically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Leadership in the twenty-first century cannot remain stuck where people used to be but is challenged to go where they are going.

Being a leader in the Wesleyan spirit seeks to include all people. As Weems explains, “The goal of inclusion is unity of purpose, direction, and commitment” (Weems 1999, 93). The reality is that people and their ideas are diverse. Unity represents Christ as He is the unifying center (Weems 1999, 99). As a result, fruitful leadership praises and emphasizes diversity. Therefore, in the twenty-first century, we must be intentional about being more inclusive rather than exclusive (Weems 1999, 99). Our exclusion will hinder what God is seeking to manifest in the Kingdom.

As the founder of Methodism, along with the influence of his brother Charles, John Wesley was an anointed, effective, and transformative leader who was radical. He shaped and led a movement of radical ministry for the world. Howard Snyder, a professor of Mission and Theology, offers a powerful perspective on the radical side of Wesley. John Wesley created and adapted structures to serve the revival that was happening in Christendom. During this revival, Wesley reached the masses but he also developed leaders (Snyder 2014, 63). He was unbiased when reaching the masses and developing leaders.

In doing so, Wesley worked with poor and uneducated persons to birth a movement (Snyder 2014, 63).

The Methodist system or movement birthed “discipline in community” (Snyder 2014,63). Wesley created fresh approaches to foster spiritual disciplines. The discipline presented throughout the Wesleyan tradition caused rapid growth. The Class Meeting methodology was a crucial part of spiritual formation and leadership development. It was also a very effective practice that would cause leadership to bear fruit. Class meetings were small groups or cell groups that were intimate settings to foster spiritual growth. They were led by class leaders who were considered to be “sub-pastors” or “disciplers” (Snyder 2014, 65). The class leader would meet with their class once a week to see if their soul was prospering, to exhort, and to collect a Ministry of Kindness offering which was to benefit the poor. Then they were to report to the pastor if anyone was sick or “out of order” in the fellowship. Before persons were initiated into the established Church, they started in the class meeting which was an entry place and a key place for belonging, leading to church growth and development (Snyder 2014, 65).

In the twenty-first century, the Class Meeting Model is now called Small Groups in most church contexts. Steve Gladen, Pastor of Small Group Community at Saddleback Church speaks to how to implement the Wesleyan model of Class Meetings. Gladen suggests that Small Groups should include fellowship, discipleship, ministry, evangelism, and worship (Gladen 2012, 10). Fellowship involves more than coffee, tea, cookies or a meal but it involves a

safe community where everyone within the group can be transparent with one another. To cultivate this safe space, Gladen encourages meeting in homes or another comfortable setting, removing distractions from the room, maintaining a comfortable temperature in the room, providing icebreakers, celebrating milestones, using social media to stay in touch with group members, and building family into your group when children are involved (Gladen 2012, 98-101).

Gladden also encourages meeting socially outside of group time, vacationing together, or participating in a spiritual retreat together. These aspects cultivate the fellowship component that Wesley originally intended when he founded Methodism (Gladen 2012, 106-107).

Discipleship leads to spiritual growth and development which should be included within the small group approach. Gladen provides some suggestions to cultivate discipleship within the context of small groups in the twenty-first century. Discipleship is living in God's presence and how we live on a day to day basis (Gladen 2012, 121). The main way to cultivate discipleship in small groups is to ensure that everyone has a Bible or some type of Bible application via electronic devices. Group members should be asked to devote a certain amount of time to studying the Bible each week. Also assign a Christian book to read together, promote prayer, and even balance as well as an opportunity to fast together (Gladen 2012, 126, 131). These practical suggestions promote discipleship.

Small groups should also have an opportunity to serve. Gladen encourages community service projects within the context of small groups as well as opportunities to serve others who are vulnerable, and those who are on the

frontlines of service on a consistent basis (Gladen 2012, 150). Small group leaders are encouraged to lead their group members to find their “sweet spot” or to find what is a passionate theme or ministry opportunity for the group collectively (Gladen 2012, 134). Once the passionate focus or area of concern is identified, then the group will be mobilized to address the need through the power of the Spirit. This practice will enhance the group’s capacity and intent to serve others (Gladen 2012, 144). Small groups should make an impact outside of the context of the group.

Another way that the small group can reach beyond itself is to pursue an evangelism strategy.

Availability is the key to evangelism. If your small group members become available, God will use them. If they’re willing to love people, doors will open. If they can simply tell their own stories, lives can be changed. And there’s nothing more exciting than watching someone come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. (Gladen 2012, 158)

Small groups must identify and be sensitive to the needs in their neighborhood because evangelism is not merely overseas (Gladen 2012, 164). Practical ways to evangelize are feeding the hungry, participating in prayer walks in the neighborhood, inviting unbelievers to join the group time, and taking time practicing how to share their testimonies with one another (Gladen 2012, 174). There are opportunities to use a hobby or a sport to reach seekers as well. Even though evangelism is not confined to overseas nations, there are opportunities for small groups to engage in mission trips together overseas (Gladen 2012, 179). These practical tools will help small groups become outward focused while they are being cultivated internally.

Worship opportunities should also become a part of small groups because it opens the door to experience the presence of God. Worship in small groups is more than music but it can be both expressive and reflective. It helps group members pause in their busy lifestyles to be still and experience God (Gladen 2012, 182). Expressive worship may include prayer, thanksgiving, music and sharing struggles. Reflective worship may include silent prayer, meditation, and fasting which leads to obedience and surrendering to God (Gladen 2012, 182-184, 191). Some practical ways that Gladen encourages people to pursue worship is through breaking into prayer groups, writing letters to God, having nights of worship as a group, keeping a prayer journal, singing hymns together, and providing a time to confess sins (Gladen 2012, 197-199). Fellowship, Discipleship, Service, Evangelism, and Worship within small groups cultivates Church growth (Gladen 2012, 226).

When we examine Wesley's radical identity, we discover that he believed the church must be a distinct, separate, countercultural covenant community if it is to speak prophetically to the world and the institutional church (Snyder 2014, 121). Wesley affirmed the fact that the Church is to be a called-out community that ought to be a prophetic witness to the world and the institutionalized as well as traditionalized churches. From this perspective he was considered a fanatic, enthusiast and radical. Wesley was a renewal agent who led a radical departure from the status quo.

Wesley was seen as a radical Protestant because he was one who enhanced the current tradition. The Radical Protestant Model that Snyder

discusses suggests that the Church is filled with committed believers living in the fellowship of mutual correction, support, and love (Snyder 2014, 125). It is also considered to be a disciplined community following the way of Christ. John Wesley had some attributes of the radical Protestant model but he was more of a radical Christian. Snyder wants us to see that Wesley believed that the Church must be a visible community with a strong focus on discipleship (Snyder 2014, 137). Wesley also emphasized the power of the Holy Spirit which made his faith radical, biblical and charismatic (Snyder 2014, 138). These characteristics distinguish one who is a transformative leader in the twenty-first century who can produce results for the Kingdom.

Methodism became a vital movement filled with common people. It was filled with people who had no relation or knowledge of the gospel (Snyder 2014, 139). As a result, this model threatened many who were more engaged with the established church model. It also threatened political authorities because Methodism could have turned into a political crusade (Snyder 2014, 139).

The central focus of Methodism and the Wesleyan perspective is spiritual renewal. It was a move of God which portrayed the renewing work of the Holy Spirit. "It was a 'new thing' brought forth by God – unique because it centered in Christian life and experience, not a creed" (Snyder 2014, 141). In the twenty-first century, we as leaders must be agents of spiritual renewal. We also must lead ministries to be stations of spiritual renewal. We must foster what it means to be an authentic Christian and to live that out on a daily basis. Confession is very critical but living it out is much more meaningful to God. People who are of the

world are looking for meaning and how to live out that meaning. Persons who are unsaved have many questions as to how believing in Christ could enhance their lives moving forward (Snyder 2014, 142). Developing a safe space where people can learn how to live out their confession is meaningful and effective to bear fruit.

Methodism brings a balanced perspective that includes both charismatic and institutional perspectives (Snyder 2014, 140). A balanced perspective presents as a “middle” ground as we examine how renewal is implemented in society (Snyder 2014, 152). This renewal movement rediscovers the gospel to present its true meaning. It also presents a more intimate expression of the church within a church, using some type of small group structure. This renewal movement has some link to the institutional church while being committed to unity, vitality, and wholeness (Snyder 2014, 154). It is also missional while being a covenant-based community. It trains and exercises new forms of ministry and leadership. The renewal movement is what the Church needs in the twenty-first century. Leaders must rediscover this approach and ensure that it is relevant.

Mark Gorgeatte speaks about Wesleyan leadership with a different type of lens by using Wesley’s example as a model for contemporary ministry. He speaks about Wesley as a no nonsense leader which is a different lens than we normally use. Wesley suggests that leadership should avoid speaking evil because it had devastating consequences for all who were concerned (Gorgeatte 2016, 64). He encouraged communicating fairly which included removing gossip and slander from the Christian community so that trust can be established. Leaders must refuse to engage in destructive behaviors that stem from verbal

destruction. Therefore, to lead like Wesley means to create and deepen trust among your team members (Gorveatte 2016, 79).

Wesley believed that confrontation was a necessary component of leadership because certain behaviors that poison the community should be confronted lovingly, plainly, and promptly. Confrontation in leadership is not to be shunned because it is evidence of responsibility in leadership. Confrontation can be seen as a very uncomfortable task in leadership. Many avoid confrontation due to fear, insecurity, the need to be accepted, the need to be liked by everyone on the team, amongst other barriers. “Take ownership and action in the best interests of each member of the team” (Gorveatte 2016, 92). The reality is that some of us are better at affirming and encouraging than correcting while others enjoy correcting but go too far. There must a balance between encouragement and correction when we are responsible leaders.

“Leadership in the church has a different orientation than does leadership in the secular realm. Our example is Christ” (Gorveatte 2016, 94). Wesley was very intentional about developing leaders from among those who appear to be common as Snyder expresses as well. Wesley appreciated the spiritual gifts and graces of all people regardless of their life experiences and academic achievement (Gorveatte 2016, 94-95). This approach mirrors how Jesus sought after and empowered leaders. He dealt with the tax collectors and the sinners while empowering them to be transformed agents for His Kingdom. Wesley was intentional about delegating authority as a leadership model because he believed that the best way to learn leadership was to lead something which helped to

foster the Methodist Movement (Gorveatte 2016, 95). Wesley also encourages humility when operating in leadership which stems from finding worth in Christ, not by the approval of others. Wesley believed that the way to maintain humility is to keep your focus on God while serving others (Gorveatte 2016, 107).

“Credibility is a critical element for all leaders . . . Punctuality was then and is now, a practical behavior that builds credibility” (Gorveatte 2016, 122). Wesley believes in keeping his commitments while being consistent. He also believed that inconsistency showed a lack of spiritual and organization health (Gorveatte 2016, 123). When there is consistency in leadership it will ultimately generate a level of trust. Wesley shows us that being consistent in speech, practice, and implementation breeds powerful results while revealing a root of transformative leadership.

“Wesley understood that he would give a strict account to God for his words, time, money, and energy” (Gorveatte 2016, 136). Good leaders are accountable to their work which is a shared standard between those on the team. This approach was not used to dominate or control the team but it was carefully explained so that every action was carried out smoothly. Gorveatte mentions that, “If you want others to be accountable to you, you must set the example” (Gorveatte 2016, 148). This statement is very true because leaders must lead by example. Leaders cannot demand something that they are not willing to do themselves. “A leader without accountability is an accident waiting to happen” (Gorveatte 2016, 150).

“A sense of purpose energizes a team Mission is not a secondary consideration in the Church; it’s the main thing” (Gorveatte 2016, 151). Our highest priority should be the *Missio Dei* and it should fuel the ministry of the Church. God’s mission should be our mission ultimately. “Saving souls from eternal, spiritual death is the transcendent mission”(Gorveatte 2016, 153). This focus must drive our leadership models from a spiritual perspective. “Wesley continually evaluated and worked to improve methods used to reach and develop people” (Gorveatte 2016, 158). In order to fulfill purpose and mission while carrying forth effective leadership, one has to consistently evaluate the methods. The reality is that, “Culture changes. People change. Sadly, some leaders and churches resist change until it’s too late” (Gorveatte 2016, 160). Tactics may change while purpose never changes, but a leader must recognize when it is time to make a transition while keeping the main thing as a focus. “When you know what that one thing is and desire nothing else, something dynamic is unleashed in the world” (Gorveatte 2016, 164).

Black Church Leadership Practices

Dr. Lester McCorn, an ordained Elder of the AME Zion Church and President of Clinton College, suggests that, “The Black Church is a unique, inimitable, and exceptional institution of American life” (McCorn 2013, 31). African Methodism is a part of the Black Church and our desire is to pursue fruitful ministry, but how? This section on Black Church Leadership Practices will explore the topics of social justice, prophetic engagement, inclusivity, vision and the next generation within the context of the Black Church.

In the days of past, the clarion call and mission of the black church was two-fold: it served as a beacon of hope for the lost soul seeking grace and mercy, but it also functioned as an oasis for all issues affecting the community. The black church served as a voice in the wilderness, crying out that equality and justice belonged to all persons, despite race, social status, or lived experience. The church operated as a twenty-four hour, full-service institution, affecting change spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. (Harvey 2010, 1)

Robert Harvey challenges the church: “The Black Church must restore its position as a full-service utility that links the work of God with the work of the community” (Harvey 2010, 1). As a sociologist and social researcher, Harvey notes that the Black Church has become so focused on economic success and personal prosperity that it has lost its foundational calling which is to provide life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness within the context of community. The Black church must reclaim her prophetic voice by standing up for the inequalities represented in today’s culture. Thus, it is the responsibility of the Black church to not compromise the message of the gospel with a message of capitalism, that is, it must not become so focused on individualized gain that the essential message of the cross which is grace, mercy, and liberty becomes lost (Harvey 2010, 1).

The black church must focus on living the commission of compassion, while also continuing to preach a message of freedom, justice, equality, and hope for all persons from all walks of life. It cannot become so entangled with a message of riches that it overlooks the crucial issues of daily life – deteriorating education, unaffordable housing, rising unemployment, marginal healthcare, and several others. (Harvey 2010, 1)

Dr. Jeffrey Tribble who is also an ordained Elder of the AME Zion Church and a tenured seminary professor at Columbia Theological Seminary states that, “A new vision of black pastoral leadership is needed...when many denominational black congregations are struggling to fulfill their priestly and

prophetic functions in communities that really need the spiritual and social services that these congregations provide” (Tribble 2005, 7). The Black Church must regain her prophetic assignment which will bring forth fruit in the congregation as well as the community. In order for this to happen we need “spiritual leaders who are intentionally engaged in the work of transforming persons, churches, and communities” (Tribble 2005, 9). Also, “Transformation pastoral [and lay] leaders [must be] open to being continually transformed themselves” (Tribble 2005, 11), to offer transformative priestly and prophetic leadership in the twenty-first century.

The Black Church must return to its roots of resistance by confronting oppression, institutional racism, black apathy, and complacency, while practicing social and economic independence (Davis 2010, 25). Church is beyond an emotional experience but it is a place of empowerment. Emotionalism will never confront the systems that oppress humanity (Davis 2010, 26). The Black community must actively come against the causes of their suffering which is the foundation of social justice. When the leaders of the Black Church fail to analyze the suffering Black community, they unconsciously assist people to participate in their own victimization. Therefore, the Black Church must aggressively involve itself in social and political action so that it can remain relevant as well as respected in the twenty-first century (Davis 2010, 27).

In the twenty-first century, the Black Church cannot afford to fail the community. If it does, it will forfeit respect and loyalty. Too many people have already left the church, and many more don't see the relevance of the church in their lives. (Davis 2010, 29)

The Black Church is called to be prophetic in the midst of injustice in our community as Tribble states as well (Tribble 2005, 12). “Religious officials must revive as well as renew organizational effectiveness of churches...” (June and Mathis 2013, 44). The Black Church must be an agent or the standard for our community to reverse what God did not ordain for creation. We are called to be a prophetic witness and exercise prophetic authority to bring change and communal transformation. Especially since all of the African Methodist denominations were birthed out of oppression to lead persons and communities to freedom. They were forced into the public because of the nature of the black condition of that era (McCorn 2013, 35). In the twenty-first century, we must be “politico-prophetic” as McCorn states, a role he fulfills in his work as an ordained Elder in the AME Zion Church (McCorn 2013, 35).

The Black Church cannot neglect the mission of liberation according to Tribble (Tribble 2005, 87). We are called to be a symbol and instrument of freedom in the midst of a society that oppresses others based upon race, class, and gender. The subjects and objects of liberation are people who live in communities that have been marginalized by racial, political, and economic injustice (McCorn 2013, 51). As we engage or struggle with the issues of our society as well as in the context of the church then the Black Church will be transformed as a result (Tribble 2005, 87).

Neglecting the theology of liberation in our ministry suggests “ineffectual spirituality” (McCorn 2013, 47). Our spirituality as African Methodists becomes shallow when we neglect our prophetic assignment and remain inwardly focused.

The Kingdom of God will also not reach far if we do not become a prophetic witness offering the ministry of liberation. We must recover a spirituality in the Black Church that counters the effects of racism, classism, and oppression (McCorn 2013, 55).

Michael Evans, a Black Church scholar, speaks to the reality that Black Churches have been clergy-dominated and that this phenomenon needs to change in order for there to be fruitful ministry in the African American context (Evans 2018, 435). Davis shares the root to that phenomenon is because the Black preacher was considered to be the most influential person in the lives of early Black Americans (Davis 2010, 14). It was the Black preacher that promoted education and provoked life in the people when society snuffed it out. Therefore, the black community depended upon the pastor to solve both personal and communal issues (Davis 2010, 15). This dependence has become an issue for the Black Church in the twenty-first century. To remedy this issue, Evans suggests there must be a utilization of the many talents within the congregation to serve in all aspects of church life, particularly in leadership. As a result, there will be better trained and more involved laity in the mission of the Church (Evans 2018, 435).

The reason for the change is because the pastor is no longer the dominant figure in the African American context. We also must continue to acknowledge that historically pastors had so much authority because of the culture surrounding the Jim Crow era (Evans 2018, 510). However, that era has changed, and culture has advanced in some ways. African Americans have begun to take advantage

of educational opportunities and are becoming more affluent, so the lone voice of the pastor is not always depended upon (Evans 2018, 435). As a result, people view the church and leadership from a different vantage point. The pastor is now seen as a colleague and someone to work with, not a person of authority which has brought much contention. Many clergy leaders fail to recognize and adjust to this shift which has caused a decline in church membership. Essentially, there must be a revisiting of the pathway to service and servanthood which is a biblical mandate (Evans 2018, 486).

Clergy and lay persons are challenged to partner together in the twenty-first century to produce fruitful ministry. As Evans notes, 80% of pastors agreed that the role of the laity is important in keeping their churches alive (Evans 2018, 900). Those churches and pastors who do not believe the same have contributed to the decline in the African American church. "Failure to utilize the gifts and talents of more educated and affluent people will stifle the growth of the African-American Church" (Evans 2018, 900). To ensure that this partnership works, there is a need for continuing education for both clergy and lay people (Evans 2018, 933).

There also must be an openness to blend leadership styles for the success of the twenty-first century African American Church. The partnership must involve "...Respect, honesty, responsibility, and hope..."(Chand 2010, 65) so it can be successful and long standing. We also must acknowledge that the Kingdom cannot expand in isolation but there must be a healthy balance of collaboration. Swezter, even though not African American, speaks to the

importance of involving lay leaders. It is a universal practice that leads to church growth (Swetzer 2003, 94).

As we examine this partnership, we cannot dismiss the role of women. “No black denomination ordained a woman...until the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church reversed the traditional stance” that women were not called to be preach or serve in a leadership role (Anyabwile 2015, 125). Womanist scholars have suggested that women in leadership is a matter of justice that has not been fully addressed in the Black Church. The reality is that Black Churches were organized and founded upon the principle that there should be equality for all but did not consider sexism.

Womanist scholars believe that the Black Church has not lived up to its ethic of liberation when it comes to women (Anyabwile 2015, 127). Therefore, the church is challenged to reclaim and even revisit her stance of liberation so that it is inclusive of all within the context of leadership. Women should be included in all aspects of leadership of the Church which includes episcopal leadership, pastoral leadership, and other forms of church leadership which includes administrative boards. This inclusion combats the limitations that women should just be seen as First Lady, Missionary President, and a Deaconness. The reality is that women bring so much to the table and their voices should be heard (Anyabwile 2015, 127).

Leadership always matters for African American families and communities (June and Mathis 2013, 32). Those who deem themselves as spiritual leaders stand in the gap for those created in the image of God while being a spiritual,

tangible, and living incarnation of God's truth. "God holds all leaders to a higher standard of responsibility to care for the disadvantaged"(June and Mathis 2013, 33). With this being true, leaders must see ahead and clearly with integrity as agents to unfold the Kingdom of God. As a result, leaders must understand and address their followers in the social system, markets, industry, organization, community, social network, group and the individual (June and Mathis 2013, 35).

The African American context is filled with disparities and distress which presents itself through our communities that are filled with segregation, economic turmoil and violence (June and Mathis 2013, 37). These issues are affecting those in the Black Church. To be solution-focused, leadership must change concerning its patterns and methods. In the twenty-first century, there must be more persons willing to engage in leadership and open to lead by vision which projects long term growth (June and Mathis 2013, 39). The new paradigm in the twenty-first century empowers and inspires the individual while creating a team work approach as Evans suggested. Leaders are change agents and develop other leaders to continue the paradigm (June and Mathis 2013, 39).

Commitment is another necessary foundation for a healthy congregation because commitment to a kingdom agenda will turn a congregation toward a healthy aggressive prophetic ministry (June and Mathis 2013, 105). To foster the partnership that Evans has outlined and the goal of prophetic ministry, there must be commitment. The decline of churches and the lack of fruit is due to poor commitment levels. Therefore, commitment can be fostered through envisioning, informing, enlisting, involving, encouraging, equipping, enabling, empowering,

and entrusting with those who we are called to serve (June and Mathis 2013, 111-112).

Tribble highlights what will make a Black Church fruitful as well. Some of those church growth principles are developing ministries that meet needs as Wesley suggested. Also developing a stewardship program, celebrating worship, and augmenting volunteer leadership will move the church ahead. We must also invest in children and youth ministries while using technological media to reach more people (Tribble 2005, 96). As Evans presents too, there must be shared transforming leadership for long-lasting growth to take place in the context of African Methodism.

Church leadership in the twenty-first century must work to help move the Black Church beyond survival mode of operation to a liberation model of operation which empowers others. The Black Church has not yet made the paradigm shift. It still operates from a survival mode...to reach total liberation, there must be a new mindset and strategy to bring about fundamental changes in the lives of people who are oppressed...the goal is to empower the people to act on behalf of their own self-interest. (Davis 2010, 101)

The Black Church is in need of a revival but it will require significant wisdom and courage. One aspect to reviving the Black Church is leadership. Restoring godly character is very important when we examine transformative leadership (Anyabwile 2015, 109). Godly character is fueled by prayer and discipleship. Leaders must be committed to prayer and discipleship in order to thrive in twenty-first century church context of the Black community. Another aspect to continue to consider is that there must be a shared leadership approach because of biblical accountability, balance, and burden sharing as Evans alludes to. "If we are going to revive the church, we can no longer allow

fear of change, possessive leadership and idolatrous attachment” to certain control figures in the church context (Anyabwile 2015, 123).

Therefore, this new century requires new moral and focused leadership. We need leaders who will speak out and struggle against unjust structures. The Black Church must develop and produce leaders who are full of the Holy Spirit as well as well trained (Davis 2010, 99). Millennials are searching for faith leaders who do not avoid controversy and disrupt the status quo. This same generation is looking for opportunities to agitate the current paradigms so that liberation can take place (Davis 2010, 101).

Reviving the Black Church requires training future leaders (Anyabwile 2015, 167). Leaders must replicate themselves within the next generation. Mentoring is a very important aspect to this revival from a leadership standpoint. A healthy apprenticeship model should be recovered to pour into the next generation. The decline that we are seeing within the Black Church is due to the lack of mentoring or the fear of being threatened by what a certain generation has to offer (Anyabwile 2015,167). Therefore, the Black Church must restore and reclaim what is already in our DNA to experience revival and fruitful ministry in our context.

The Black Church is challenged to pass this new paradigm onto future generations which will cause fruit to be born, especially in African Methodism. One must learn and develop leaders through spirituality, evangelism, respect for authority, moral purity, physical purity, propriety, responsibility, and relational skills (June and Mathis 2013, 198). Therefore, seasoned leaders must commit as

stated before to empower the next generation to be fruit bearers. “The Black Church has always been a major source of leadership development for our communities” (June and Mathis 2013, 202). So we are challenged not to forsake the mantle that will carry through many generations.

Douglas Powe, a scholar in the area of Church Growth, Evangelism, and Urban Ministry, believes that when training new generational leaders, we must note that the sacred space of Church is not confined to a space or a location, it is embodied through character so the way leadership is implemented may look different than generations past (Powe 2012, 51). Training a new generation of leaders must include practices that teach an openness to the Spirit to interpret foreign concepts and paradigms that are relevant implications for the Church in the twenty-first century (Powe 2012, 63). Millennials also want to be seen and heard within the context of church leadership. Therefore, this generation is seeking a collaborative approach to function and operate within the context of the church. It is as if new wine needs to be placed in new wineskins. New wine represents the new mindset that is needed to rethink various practices that will engage new generations (Powe 2012, 81). The new wineskin includes engaging the community as a leadership practice and transparency (Powe 2012, 93-96).

The question that we must ask, is there still a need for the Black Church? Reginald Davis believes that the Black Church is still the cultural, economic, social, theological, and spiritual glue that holds together the process of freeing black America from its deep malaise (Davis 2010, 25). The hope for the Black community will not come from the government but from the Black Church. The

goal is to reform and revive the Black Church and put it back on the track of liberation out of which it was founded. This renewal is necessary if the Black Church is to survive in the twenty-first century (Davis 2010, 25).

Leadership Models

The various leadership practices presented in the literature review can be narrowed down into three leadership models: congregational leadership, small group leadership, and inclusive leadership. The practices that were explored fit into one of these three categories. Each of these leadership models will be explored to provide practical tips to enhance transformational leadership practices within the twenty-first century church. Implementing these models in a contextual way will breed lasting results and fruit that will last.

Congregational Leadership

Historically in some church contexts, there has been an imbalance and misapplication between the roles of Clergy and Laity (Dale 1986, 19). Some believe that clergy are tasked to proclaim the Word and care for the souls of congregants and then lay people are only tasked with leading. Robert Dale challenges that ideology as he states, “Ideally, a balanced, unified, and team oriented application of this three-function model provides rich ministry in the congregation” (Dale 1986, 19). Dale encourages a meshing of all three roles between both clergy and lay people which is a congregational leadership model. Clergy and lay can both teach the Word and lead worship as well as guide others in discipleship along with developing a caring community. The pulpit and the pew can both counsel and manage resources (Dale 1986, 20).

Congregational leadership includes envisioning the future together. Dale suggests that sharpening the congregation's vision provides the launching pad for ministries and its definition of the future (Dale 1986, 93). This definition of the future must be grounded theologically so the Pastor and the congregation must have a theological stance and effective ministry practices can be implemented. However, Dale suggests that the congregation should be a part of the dreaming process so there is broad involvement and support (Dale 1986, 97). A vision acts as a magnet, drawing a congregation to participate in leading each other together towards its future in ministry (Dale 1986, 103).

Within the congregational leadership model, it is imperative to build ministry teams. Some of the previous literature has already suggested this reality. Dale confirms that by offering the perspective that "unifying diverse persons and tasks is team building along with support, respect, and interdependency" (Dale 1986, 136). Through the team building approach, leadership becomes a shared responsibility while enhancing Christian community and implementing effective ministry approaches (Dale 1986, 136). Relational team building is a vital approach that seeks to facilitate instead of direct. Relational team builders also keep the group focused without impulsivity while protecting the minority opinion in the process, and as a result, deeper relationships are developed which foster congregation leadership (Dale 1986, 139).

Congregational leadership requires motivation. In order to accomplish this task, the culture of the church must be motivating as Chand suggests (Dale

1986, 153). Another way to accomplish this task is to provide affirmation, when everyone's needs are met, eliminating demotivators, encouraging collaborative decision-making, and establishing covenants (Dale 1986, 154-156). Dale presents many tools to cultivate congregational leadership effectively through partnerships and collaboration. As stated, some of the practices previously explored fit into this model.

One of the denominations that uses congregational leadership in its polity and practice is the Baptist Church. Marvin McMickle shares that, "The Baptist Church lives and breathes on the principle of congregational autonomy and congregational authority . . . the people do the work of trustees, deacons, ushers, Christian educators, and counselors that sustain that work through their own giving" (McMickle 2010, 45). McMickle believes that a church cannot be effective and faithful to the work of Christ if the members are more committed to worship than working for Christ. He also believes that Christian ministry is most effective and empowered when all members participate and when all members understand their call, roles, and responsibilities (McMickle 2010, 46).

The main example of congregational leadership in the Baptist Church is the role of the diaconate. Within Methodist and Catholic traditions the roles are quite different but in the Baptist Church there should be a partnership between the Pastor and the Deacons. Deacons take the helm in church leadership if the pastor is absent, incapacitated or when the pulpit is vacant (McMickle 2010, 52). McMickle shares that Deacons fulfill the purpose of serving the church while freeing the pastors to dedicate more time to preaching and prayer (McMickle

2010, 107). Deacons are trained and charged with the duties of participating in devotional preludes, preparatory prayer, Sunday worship, midweek services, Christian education, the right hand of fellowship when new members join, baptism, communion, funerals, visitation, benevolence, administrative accountability, congregational policies, and other duties as assigned (McMickle 2010, 107-113). The Baptist Church provides a congregational leadership framework that may work in various church contexts.

Small Group Leadership

Within the literature, Wesleyan Leadership Practices were explored and one of the practices highlighted was class system which is small group leadership. Small group leadership is a model that can produce fruit within the context of the church in the twenty-first century.

One of the tenets of small group leadership according to Gladen is shared ownership which alludes to shared responsibility within the group (Gladen 2011, 59). No one has a monopoly of power within this model because there is always a shared approach. Through this shared approach, there is a rotation of leadership designed to develop skills in potential leaders (Gladen 2011, 60). The shared leadership approach displayed through a rotation would be impactful when it relates to mentoring the next generation. Gladen believes that this shared leadership model gives small group members the opportunity to grow through conflict and the opportunity to empower one another (Gladden 2011, 62).

Small group leadership also has a relational dynamic. Strong relationships are built through small groups and become a practical demonstration of

discipleship (Gladden 2011, 72). Through this relational dynamic, persons within the small group are empowered to move from sitting to serving (Gladen 2011, 81). Gladen believes that people often fail to serve because they feel that they have nothing to offer or have not been offered specific opportunities so churches are filled with overworked pastors and underworked members (Glad 2011, 81). Small group leadership seeks to resolve that issue by helping others understand the biblical mandate of serving, helping others develop their passion for ministry, providing opportunities to serve, and affirming the gifts of everyone in the group so that there will be growth. Gladen outlines how servanthood should be modeled within the context of the Church which will compel congregants to partner with the pastor in ministry (Gladen 2011, 86).

Small group leadership has the ability to transform mindsets and behaviors. Rick Howerton, who wrote “A Different Kind of Tribe,” speaks to the reality that the twenty-first century calls for a new type of small group dynamic. Howerton exposes the mistrust that many have for the Church and leadership which controls their attitudes towards God (Howerton 2012, 21). Howerton believes that small group leadership will help to rebuild trust as it relates to leadership and the Church when trust has been broken by misuse of leadership in the past (Howerton 2012, 31). Accordingly, small group leaders need to be co-laborers, nurturers, and an encouragement so restoration can take place. Leadership must also earn influence rather than depend on the title to gain influence which will aid the restoration process as well (Howerton 2012, 59).

As a result, small group leadership causes persons to rethink and retool the way they live their lives (Howerton 2012, 57). Small group leaders must be intentional to create a safe space where the principles in Scripture are lived out effectively (Howerton 2012, 57). Howerton suggests that leaders within this model are also charged with involving the Savior, engaging the senses, summoning spiritual gifts, expecting the miraculous, listening to the heart and loving people without ideology (Howerton 2012, 151-158). Small group leadership has many dynamics that have fruitful implications.

Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership is another model that has the ability to produce fruit. This leadership model has not been explored much within the context of the church but it is a needed conversation in the twenty-first century. The Church Universal is challenged to look at inclusivity through the lens of ethnicity and disabilities when it relates to leadership. Michael Jagessar who is a minister of the United Reformed Church states that, "Differences such as ethnicity, gender, and orientation disclose the richness of the manifoldness of God"(Jagessar 2015, 57). He also states that, "We are creatures of the earth interconnected and interdependent reflecting God's diversity. From the beginning diversity has been God's intention" (Jagessar 2015, 65). Inclusive leadership confirms God's intention and purpose in the earth realm.

Jagessar suggests that cultural differences in leadership still matter but they can be seen for what God intends which is a blessing rather than a means of enslavement and exclusion (Jagessar 2015, 72). When looking at inclusive

leadership through ethnicity there are a few considerations that should be made. Leaders must reconsider our understanding of God and how He works in the world through the issues of diversity, church and community. Leaders must also risk transformation grounded on justice, equity, and the redress of power. Leaders must intentionally reclaim the church for what it is which is not based upon historic/ human invention. Leaders are encouraged to honestly wrestle with the issue of who holds the power while creating an environment where everyone is valued as well as considered around the table. Leaders must finally recognize difference as a gift to be embraced (Jagessar 2015, 89-93).

John Hull, a professor who is blind, speaks to the reality that disabilities must be considered within inclusive leadership. All disabilities are accepted by God and should be accepted as people (Hull 2014, 94-95). Disabled people have a distinct ministry in the church by examining what is the prophetic message of the church in our culture and how disabled people can make a unique contribution to that renewal in leadership (Hull 2014, 97). Hull affirms the fact that people with disabilities have a particular role in enabling the church to be itself (Hull 2014, 99). The Church will become a greater representation of the Kingdom of God from a leadership standpoint when it becomes more faithful and committed to inclusive love (Hull 2014, 100).

Stefanie Johnson, a professor at the University of Colorado, has coined a phrase, "Inclusify" which speaks to inclusive leadership. Inclusify means to live and lead in a way that recognizes and celebrates unique and dissenting perspectives while creating a collaborative and open minded environment where

everyone feels they truly belong (Johnson 2020, xiii). Leaders within the context of the church need to embrace this ideology within its practice and protocols. Johnson encourages that every organization should cultivate a sense of belonging. The reality is that everyone feels like an outsider at times so spaces should be created to eradicate that feeling within organizations. Johnson also suggests that leaders have the power to ensure that people are not left out as well as the power to create space for everyone to be welcomed and be a part of the team even if they are different (Johnson 2020, 6). She also shares that, “Leaders create belonging by welcoming people to fit in while supporting them in their desire to stand out” (Johnson 2020, 7).

Johnson speaks to the fact that we all want to belong but we all have the desire to be unique (Johnson 2020, 7). Leaders and followers both want to know that unique talents are valued and that every voice is heard as well as respected. The reality is that we willingly give up aspects of ourselves each day but there are also elements of ourselves that we resist abandoning because these characteristics make up our identity and we would like those behaviors affirmed. Inclusive leadership seeks to affirm the uniqueness of others (Johnson 2020, 8). Johnson believes that Uniqueness + Belonging = Inclusion. Without both of these essential ingredients, one cannot feel included (Johnson 2020, 11). When included, Johnson suggests that one feels that ideas and contributions are recognized which confirms team membership (Johnson 2020, 13).

Johnson encourages that inclusive leadership includes breaking biases. We all hold biases of one kind or another but only self-examination can help us

break through the biases. The ABC'S of Breaking Bias: Admit it, Block it, Count it (Johnson 2020, 23). Admittance is the first step because one must admit that bias exists because when we do we can move past them (Johnson 2020, 25). Blocking the biases reveals an intentionality about thought process and ideology about who is qualified instead of making "gut" judgments (Johnson 2020, 26). Johnson encourages that once people admit and block biases, then they need to set goals to continue the process of breaking biases. Setting benchmarks helps to hold the organization accountable (Johnson 2020, 28).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature presents much information and insight about leadership practices and models that will produce fruit. Leadership is a very important part of this transformation. Congregational, small group, and inclusive leadership are beneficial models that have the ability to produce lasting results within the twenty-first century church. The literature portrayed Secular, Church, Fruitful, Wesleyan, and Black Church leadership practices as well as models such as Congregational Leadership, Small Group Leadership, and Inclusive Leadership which bring a well-rounded approach to the ability of leadership to produce fruit in the twenty-first century. The next chapter will describe the design and method of the survey project.

CHAPTER FOUR

DESIGN, PROCEDURE, AND ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this project was to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The research question was: To what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church?

The project was designed to survey both clergy and lay leaders within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church. The survey gathered the information needed to meet the project goals. The survey was facilitated mostly online through email and social media but I did have to hand out paper copies of the survey to those who do not use technology. I also had to contact persons via phone so they could participate as well.

The data was collected from fifty-three clergy and lay leaders in the selected district which includes Western/Eastern Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Eastern Tennessee and Virginia, Washington, DC, Maryland, and Delaware as well as the island of Barbados and the country of Guyana. I sent email and texts to every clergy person and lay leader that I had contact information for within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. I even posted the survey link on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to contact as many leaders as I could within the target population. An online survey was the best option in my opinion to capture the population that I needed for this project.

The survey developed for this project was designed to assess various leadership models and how leaders implemented those models within their context. First, I wanted to discover if leaders knew what leadership models they used in their ministries. I also wanted to discover if leaders were implementing fruitful practices within their leadership model. Another purpose was to discover if leaders understood their Kingdom mandate as leaders as well as their prophetic responsibility within their communities. I also wanted to evaluate the intent of leaders to mentor the next generation so that fruitful leadership would continue for generations. Leaders who participated in this survey could play an important role in producing other fruitful leaders so that the Kingdom could be advanced.

The survey was designed to discover responses to the eight goals for this project. The project goals were:

1. To discover the current leadership models within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church.
2. To discover the extent of how leadership models influence church growth.
3. To discover the extent to which church leaders allow the Spirit to guide their leadership models.
4. To discover the extent to which church leaders engage in the community as part of their leadership model.
5. To discover the extent of how the current leadership models produce fruitful leaders.
6. To discover the extent to which church leaders mentor the next generation for leadership.

7. To discover leadership styles that contribute to a church growth model.
8. To discover how churches embrace a Kingdom model within their context to cultivate vision.

Context

The setting of this research is the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District which includes the Allegheny, Barbados, East Tennessee and Virginia, Guyana, Philadelphia and Baltimore, Ohio, St. Vincent, and Virginia Conferences. The Mid Atlantic Episcopal District is one of the twelve Episcopal Districts represented within the AME Zion Church. Each Episcopal District is divided into geographical areas around the United States as well as Internationally which includes the entire continent of Africa. Most Episcopal Districts are assigned to Overseas Conferences which includes the Virgin Islands and the continents of Europe, Asia, and South America to support the work of missions. However, the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District is extremely diverse because it represents urban, suburban, and rural contexts. We also have three overseas conferences who have been assigned to our stateside work. I grew up in the AME Zion Church and began my preaching ministry at the age of thirteen years old. I am now an Itinerant Elder within the denomination and have served as a Senior Pastor for the last five years.

The participants in this study come from various contexts and have various perspectives based upon where they serve. Clergy and lay perspectives were presented in this study through a pastoral perspective, conference, district, and local officer perspective as well. Leaders within the context of the Mid

Atlantic Episcopal District are responsible for administration, management, worship, discipleship, outreach, fellowship, stewardship, and fundraising.

This district had been restructured in 2016, as the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church was formulated in 2016 at the Fiftieth Quadrennial Session of the AME Zion Church. At that time, Bishop W. Darin Moore was assigned as the Presiding Prelate. The Mid Atlantic I Episcopal Area which consisted of the Allegheny, Barbados, Guyana, New Jersey, and Ohio Conferences. Throughout, the years, this Episcopal area was struggling financially so the New Jersey Conference was taking the financial load to support the other struggling Conferences. Please note that the New Jersey Conference was not as strong as it once was so it became a burden for the New Jersey Conference to support those struggling Conferences within Mid Atlantic I.

Therefore, the Restructuring Commission decided to restructure some of the Episcopal areas. The New Jersey Conference was assigned to be part of the Northeastern Episcopal District which includes the Bahamas, London-Midland, New England, New York and Western New York Conferences which had more strength. The Allegheny, Barbados, Guyana, and Ohio Conferences were assigned to join the East-Tennessee, Philadelphia and Baltimore, St Vincent, and Virginia Conferences who were apart of the Mid Atlantic II Episcopal District. The restructuring birthed a new Episcopal area called the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. The struggling conferences from Mid Atlantic I were pulled together with a stronger Episcopal area to support them more effectively. The restructuring

brought much tension and discomfort but it was the best option for all of these Conferences.

Since I have been in the pastoral ministry, I have had the opportunity to pastor in the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference and the Allegheny Conference. When I started pastoring, Bishop Richard K. Thompson assigned me to pastor my first church in the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference which was part of the Mid Atlantic II Episcopal District. Once restructured, the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference became the strongest Conference of the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. The Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference has five Presiding Elder Districts. The Conference is extremely progressive, and the Churches embed technology into their ministries. The churches are very stable and self-sufficient while some have 501(c)3 non-profit designations. The pastors mostly have theological training and depend very heavily on the power of the Spirit. The ministries offered are very creative while engaging millennials.

In 2019, I was sent to pastor in the Allegheny Conference and immediately I discovered that this conference has overcome many obstacles throughout the years. Overall, the Allegheny Conference has a few current struggles while the leading churches have under one hundred members. Each church has significant structural damage and needs repairs. The Allegheny Conference is an aging conference and young adults are not fully represented in leadership roles. The Conference does not fully embrace technology and creative measures at this time. The Allegheny Conference has two Presiding Elder Districts with five churches on each district. The Conference once had fifty churches and has now

shrunk to ten. However, Bishop Moore is appointing new leadership to serve in the Allegheny Conference so that transformative leadership models are executed.

Participants

Seventy-five clergy and lay leaders were invited to participate in the project, and fifty-two completed the survey. The persons were either pastors, pastoral assistants, conference district staff, or local leaders.

The overall goal was that participants would be honest concerning their thoughts on leadership within the Church context. Additionally, the expectation was for those leaders to assess their role within the greater Church which is beyond their local context. The intent of the survey was explained to each participant who responded. The participants were asked to choose the number that corresponds with the leader's transparency on a Likert scale. The survey was conducted through Survey Monkey which made the answers anonymous.

The survey that was designed for this project was emailed to twenty-seven clergy and lay leaders around the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. Additionally, the survey was sent to twenty more clergy and lay leaders through text message. The survey was also posted on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. An option was also given to persons who did not have computers or smart phones to complete paper copies that were to be turned in within a two-week period. Leaders responded mostly through the social media platforms provided.

The persons who responded through social media completed the survey immediately. Those who received the survey through email needed various reminders to complete the survey within a two-week timeframe. Some who were texted the survey mostly did not respond. Only three persons turned in their paper copy of the surveys. The timeframe to return surveys was clearly stated as well as the purpose of the project.

The survey was extended to seventy-five persons through email, text, social media, and through paper copies. All persons were African American or from African descent. The respondents provided the following demographic information. Fifty-two out of seventy surveys were returned. Forty females and twelve males completed the survey. Fifteen participants have served in their leadership role for three years or less. Seven participants have served in their leadership role for three to five years. Nine participants have served in their leadership role for six to ten years. Six participants have served in their leadership role for eleven to fifteen years. Fifteen participants have served in their leadership role for fifteen years or more.

The age of the leaders who participated were as followed: One participant was under the age of twenty. Three participants were between the ages of twenty-one and thirty. Nine participants were between the ages of thirty-one and forty. Nine participants were between the ages of forty-one and fifty. Eight participants were between the ages of fifty-one and sixty. Fourteen participants were between the ages of sixty-one and seventy. Seven participants were

between the ages of seventy-one and eighty. Additionally, one participant did not disclose their age.

Twenty-one participants serve within the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference. Fourteen participants serve within the Allegheny Conference. Six participants serve within the Ohio Conference. Five participants serve within the Virginia Conference. One participant serves in the East Tennessee and Virginia Conference. Three participants serve within the Overseas Conferences. Three participants did not disclose which Annual Conference they were a part of.

All fifty-two participants responded that they were each actively involved in the discipleship efforts of their local church. Each participant's perspective was valuable to this project and much appreciated. There was also much diversity presented between the stateside conferences and the overseas conferences. Even the leaders within stateside conferences presented with diverse perspectives as well since some areas are urban, suburban and rural. The skillset of each participant was valuable to gather the much needed data for the implementation of the project for years to come within the AME Zion Church and beyond.

Procedure and Assessment

This discovery project included the creation of an online survey of both qualitative and quantitative questions that was used for evaluation (see Appendix Two for the actual survey used). These qualitative questions were also used to assess the eight goals:

1. List one or two leadership models that you have used within your current ministry assignment.
2. List one or two leadership models that you have used to influence church growth.
3. List the ways in which you have allowed the Spirit to guide your approach to leadership.
4. List one to two ways that you have included community engagement within your leadership model for your ministry.
5. List the ways in which your current leadership has produced fruitful leaders.
6. List the ways in which you are invested in the next generation of leaders.
7. List the ways your leadership styles has both cultivated and sustained church growth.
8. List the ways in which Kingdom models are used within your context to cultivate vision.

The survey was either emailed, texted, or handed to participants with instructions to complete it as soon as possible, with a two week deadline. Social media was also used to connect with leaders within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District for which I did not have emails or phone numbers. Those who took the survey via social media did so immediately. Producing the survey online was the best option because most persons did not have to meet with me to receive the surveys, and I believed that I would receive more participation if I provided the survey through virtual means. I gave instructions to each participant on how to

complete the survey online. I also gave instructions to those who wanted to complete it through paper. The instructions were to complete the survey within a two-week timeframe. Each participant was asked to be transparent with their responses. Even though I did not request participants to let me know when they completed the survey, many of them did so.

In order for this project to be successful I had to reflect upon leadership models that might be used within the AME Zion Church currently. I also had to reflect upon the leadership models that leaders within my context may have not tapped into. During this process of discovery, I thought about the gaps that we see in leadership as well as the lack of mentorship. I also have noticed the lack of Kingdom focused ministry and communal engagement. Additionally, I reflected upon how persons may not even know what their leadership model is and may be leading based upon impulse or feelings. From that point of reference, I started to develop the questions.

After submission of the preliminary assessment to the seminary with minimal revisions, my instrument was approved. Once approved, I reached out to my Presiding Prelate, Bishop W. Darin Moore to receive his permission to use the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District for my project. Bishop Moore graciously approved and offered his support in December 2019. Next, I began doing research on various online assessment tools and I soon determined that Survey Monkey was the best option. It appeared to be very user friendly and individuals in my context were used to using this tool. I spoke to a few friends who had completed their Doctor of Ministry degrees in the past and each of them shared

with me which package I should choose. I chose the Advantage Annual Plan which comprised all of the capabilities needed for this project and started to create the survey tool.

Once the survey was completed, I started to think about who I needed to reach in each Annual Conference for this project to be successful. Then I began to contact potential participants through email, phone calls and text messages to assess their willingness. All potential participants agreed to participate in the project. On social media platforms, through email, text messages, and verbally, I thanked each contact for their willingness to participate, and I included the link through each of these platforms or hand delivered the survey.

I waited twenty-two days for surveys to be complete since I had to send reminders to those who did not complete the survey within fourteen days. I thanked each participant individually for participating in this project after they submitted their responses. After the survey was complete, Survey Monkey generated a report and I was able to export it to my files. I began examining the results to assess if there were any confirmations of my thoughts initially or new findings. I found the survey to be very helpful and eye opening. The survey also provided opportunities to engage in even greater research. The demographics are presented in this chapter.

Depending on the goal objective, three to four forced-choice statements, along with one to two subjective, open-ended questions measured each of the eight goals. All twenty-four of the quantitative questions were measured on a five-point Likert scale listed as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The questions can be found in Appendix Two.

Survey Monkey compiled the information for each response. I reviewed the results for each response. The results of the survey were compiled into tables that will be reported in Chapter Five. Each of the project goals were addressed to show the results of the participants' perspective which corresponds to the outcome of the project. The questions in the survey were randomized and an analysis was included for each goal when examining the average of the qualitative data. Both question formats in the survey were addressed by way of the perspectives of the participants. However, I did notice that many participants either skipped some of the qualitative questions or did not fully understand what the question was asking of them.

The results of the assessment will be reported in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

REPORTING THE RESULTS

The purpose of this project was to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The research question was: To what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church?

The design of the discovery survey was discussed in Chapter Four. The survey served as an instrument to measure the extent to which the research questions addressed the seven project goals. The project goals were:

1. To discover the current leadership models within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church.
2. To discover the extent of how leadership models influence church growth.
3. To discover the extent to which church leaders allow the Spirit to guide their leadership models.
4. To discover the extent to which church leaders engage in the community as part of their leadership model.
5. To discover the extent of how the current leadership models produce fruitful leaders.
6. To discover the extent to which church leaders mentor the next generation for leadership.
7. To discover leadership styles that contribute to a church growth model.

8. To discover how churches embrace a Kingdom model within their context to cultivate vision

The survey consisted of three forced-choice statements and one open ended question per project goal. The quantitative statements were measured on a five-point Likert scale as follows: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

In this chapter, the results will be presented as they correlate with the goals that they were each designed to evaluate. Each goal will be presented in the order of prominence based upon the scoring of each answer.

Goal # 6 Mentoring the Next Generation for Leadership

The goal that scored the highest in prominence was: “To discover the extent to which church leaders mentor the next generation of leadership.” The average score for the three qualitative statements was 4.37 on a five-point scale.

The three qualitative statements were as followed: I am open to genuine mentorship for the next generation of leaders (#6). I enjoy mentoring the next generation of leaders (#14). I believe in investing in a new generation of leadership through mentorship (#22). The individual scores are listed below

Table 1. Goal #6: Mentoring the Next Generation for Leadership

Project Goals	Average	Responses
6 – I am open to genuine mentorship for the next generation of leaders.	4.42	52
22- I believe in investing in a new generation of leaders through mentorship.	4.40	52
14- I enjoy mentoring the next generation of leaders.	4.30	52
Composite	4.37	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

The response to statement #6 ranked the highest regarding this goal. Thirty-two participants responded strongly agree and eighteen agree. One participant neither agreed nor disagreed and one person strongly disagreed with the statement. The responses to the first statement scored as the highest quantitative question throughout the entire survey. Leaders are open to provide genuine mentorship for the next generation of leaders.

The response to statement #22 and #14 scored second and third respectively. The results reveal that leaders believe in investing in the next generation of leaders through mentorship. Statement #22 ranked the second highest with a score of 4.40. Thirty participants responded strongly agree and twenty-one responded agree. One person responded neutral and no one disagreed with the statement. Statement #14 ranked the lowest of the quantitative statements for this goal but it still revealed that leaders enjoy mentoring the next generation. Twenty-seven participants responded strongly

agree and twenty-three responded agree. One participant responded neutral and one person responded strongly disagree.

The qualitative statement for the goal was: List the ways in which you are invested in the next generation of leaders.

Table 1a. Goal #6 Investment into the Next Generation

Question	Responses	
List the ways in which you are invested in the next generation of leaders.	Mentorship	9
	Engagement	4
	Modeling	3
	Training	3
	Encouragement	2
	Shared Leadership	2
	Other	2
	Total Responses	25

25 out of 52 participants responded to Qualitative Question #1

Twenty-seven participants chose not to respond to this statement. The results also revealed that mentorship scored the most prominent way that participants invested in the next generation. Engagement scored as the second most prominent way that participants invested in the next generation. Modeling and training scored as the third prominent way that participants invested in the next generation. Encouragement and shared leadership scored as the least prominent ways that participants invested into the next generation. The other responses include: support and a willingness to be teachable.

Goal #3 Allowing the Spirit's Guidance in Leadership

The goal that scored second in prominence was: "To discover the extent to which church leaders allow the Spirit to guide their leadership models." The average score of the three quantitative statements was 4.19 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as followed: I am open to the Spirit's guidance when I implement my leadership model (#3). I use spiritual discernment when executing my leadership model within my context (#11). I allow the wisdom that comes from the Spirit to guide my approaches to leadership (#19). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 2. Goal #3: Allowing the Spirit's Guidance in Leadership

Project Goals	Average	Responses
3- I am open to the Spirit's guidance when I implement my leadership model	4.25	52
19- I allow the wisdom that comes from the Spirit to guide my approaches to leadership	4.25	52
11- I use spiritual discernment when executing my leadership model within my context.	4.09	52
Composite	4.19	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

For this goal, both statements #3 and #19 ranked the highest at 4.25. Participants are open to the Spirit's guidance when implementing leadership in their settings. Thirty-four participants responded strongly agree and twelve participants responded agree. Two responded neutral and four responded strongly disagree. Participants also allow the wisdom that comes from the Spirit to guide their approaches to leadership. Twenty-eight participants responded strongly agree and twenty responded agree. Two participants responded neutral, one responded disagree, and one responded strongly disagree.

Statement #11 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 4.09. Participants overall use spiritual discernment when executing their leadership

models. The results were not as strong as the previous statements but the score revealed that discernment is used. Twenty -three participants responded strongly agree and twenty-two responded agree. Four participants responded neutral and three participants disagreed.

The qualitative statement for the goal was to: List the ways in which you have allowed the Spirit to guide your approach to leadership.

Table 2a- Goal #3 Spirit Led Practices

Question	Responses	
List the ways in which you have allowed the Spirit to guide your approaches to leadership.	Prayer	15
	Discernment	4
	Spiritual Disciplines	3
	Active Listening	3
	Modeling	2
	Other	3
	Total Responses	30

25 out of 52 participants responded to Qualitative Question #2

Twenty-two participants chose not to answer the question. The results also reveals that prayer was the most prominent Spirit-led practice that participants use to guide their approach to leadership. Discernment was the second most prominent answer, Active Listening and Spiritual Disciplines equally were the third most prominent answer. Modeling was the least prominent answer to the above question. The other responses for the above question included: Obedience, Openness to the Spirit, and Communication.

Goal #4 Community Engagement

The goal that scored third in prominence was: “To discover the extent to which church leaders engage in the community as part of their leadership

model.” The average score of the three qualitative statements was 3.93 on a five-point scale.

The three qualitative statements were as followed: I am engaged in my community to assess the needs (#4). I am engaged in my community as a leader (#12). I am engaged in a ministry that is open to moving beyond the walls of the church in response to my leadership model (#20). The individual score for each statement are listed below.

Table 3. Goal #4: Community Engagement

Project Goals	Average	Responses
20 – I am engaged in a ministry that is open to moving beyond the walls of the church in response to my leadership model.	4.15	52
4- I am engaged in my community to assess the needs.	3.86	52
12- I am engaged in my community as a leader.	3.78	52
Composite	3.93	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #20 as the highest at 4.15. It revealed that in this goal, participants are engaged in a ministry that is open to moving beyond the walls of the church as a leadership model. Twenty-four participants responded strongly agree, twenty-two participants responded agree, and four responded neutral. Two participants responded strong disagree. Most participants are moving beyond the walls of the church as a leader.

Statement #4 ranked the second highest in this goal with a score of 3.86. The goal revealed that, overall participants were engaged in their community to

assess the needs of their context. The results were not as strong as previous goals. Seventeen participants responded strongly agree and twenty-four participants responded agree. Eight participants responded neutral. Three participants responded disagree and one participant responded strongly disagree.

Statement # 12 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 3.78. Even though it ranked the lowest, there is some evidence that leaders were engaged in their communities. The results also reveal that some may have been unsure about what community engagement entails. Eleven participants responded strongly agree and twenty-six responded agree. Eleven participants responded neutral. One participant responded disagree and three participants responded strongly disagree.

The qualitative question for this goal was: List one to two ways that you have included community engagement within your leadership model for ministry.

Table 3a. Goal #4 Community Engagement

Question	Responses	
List one or two ways that you have included community engagement within your leadership model for your ministry.	Engagement	6
	Partnerships	5
	Social Justice Initiatives	3
	Advocacy	3
	Outreach	3
	Other	3
	Total Responses	23

23 out of 52 participants responded to Qualitative Question #3

Twenty-nine participants chose not to answer the qualitative statement. The results reveal that engagement is the most prominent way that participants engaged with their communities. Partnerships is the second most prominent way

that participants engaged with their communities. Social justice initiatives, advocacy, and outreach are the least most prominent ways that participants engaged with their communities. The other responses included: Men's and Women's Retreats, sharing resources, and fellowship within the context of community.

Goal #7 Church Growth

The goal that scored fourth in prominence was: "To discover leadership styles that contribute to a church growth model." The average score for the three quantitative statements was 3.85 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as followed: My leadership style understands the implications of church growth within my context (#7). My leadership style cultivates church growth within my context (#15). My leadership style sustains church growth within my context (#23). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 4. Goal #7: Church Growth

Project Goals	Average	Responses
7– My leadership style understands the implications of church growth within my context.	4.03	52
15- My leadership style cultivates church growth within my context.	3.82	52
23- My leadership style sustains church growth within my context.	3.71	52
Composite	3.85	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #7 the highest at 4.03. The results revealed that participants believe that their leadership style understands and informs the implications of church growth within their context. Twelve participants responded strongly agree and thirty-nine participants responded agree. One responded neutral and one responded strongly disagree.

Statement #15 ranked the second highest in this goal at 3.82. On average participants believed that their leadership style cultivates church growth within their context. Nine participants responded strongly agree and thirty-five participants responded strongly agree. Five participants responded neutral. Two participants responded disagree and one participant responded strongly agree.

Statement #23 ranked the lowest in this goal at 3.71. Eight participants responded strongly agree and twenty-nine participants responded agree. Thirteen participants responded neutral. One participant responded disagree and one participant responded strongly disagree. Overall, leaders believed that their leadership style sustained church growth. However, some participants were not able to decide if their leadership model sustained church growth or not.

The qualitative question for this goal was: List the ways your leadership styles has both cultivated and sustained church growth.

Table 4a. Goal 7 Sustaining Church Growth

Question	Responses	
List the ways your leadership styles has both cultivated and sustained church growth.	Consistency	4
	Modeling	3
	Affirmation	2
	Inclusion	2
	Training	2
	Other	6
	Total Responses	16

16 out of 52 participants responded to Qualitative Question #4

Thirty-six participants chose not to answer the statement. The results also reveal that consistency is the most prominent way that participants have sought to cultivate and sustain church growth. Modeling is the second most prominent way that participants have sought to cultivate and sustain church growth. Affirmation, inclusion, and training are the least prominent ways that participants have sought to cultivate and sustain church growth. The other responses included: opportunity, creating systems, small group leadership, contextual understanding and multiplier.

Goal #5: Producing Fruitful Leaders

The goal that scored fifth in prominence was: “To discover the extent of how the current leadership models produce fruitful leaders.” The average score for the three quantitative statements was 3.78 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were: The model that I currently use suggests that I understand what it means to be a fruitful leader (#5). The model that I currently use has been proven effective for leadership development (#13). The model that I currently use produced fruitful leaders in my context (#21). The individual score for each statement are listed below.

Table 5. Goal #5: Producing Fruitful Leaders

Project Goals	Average	Responses
5– The model that I currently use suggests that I understand what it means to be a fruitful leader.	3.86	52
13- The model that I currently use has been proven effective for leadership development.	3.82	52
21- The model that I currently use has produced fruitful leaders in my context.	3.67	52
Composite	3.78	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #5 the highest. The results reveal that on average leaders understand what it means to be a fruitful leader. Eleven participants responded strongly agree and thirty-two participants responded agree. Seven participants responded neutral, one participant responded disagree, and one participant responded strongly disagree.

Statement #13 ranked the second highest in this goal with a score of 3.82. On average, the leadership models that are used have been proven effective for leadership development. Seven participants responded strongly agree and thirty-six responded agree. Eight participants responded neutral and one person responded strongly disagree.

Statement #21 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 3.67. Five participants responded strongly agree and thirty-one scored agree. Fourteen participants responded neutral, one participant responded disagree, and one participant responded strongly disagree. The results show that some leaders use a model that has produced fruitful leaders in their context. However, there are

other leaders who are not fully sure if their model has done so or not. It is important to note the ambiguity presented in the results.

The qualitative question was: List the ways in which your current leadership has produced fruitful leaders.

Table 5a Goal 5 Fruitful Leadership

Question	Responses	
List the ways in which your current leadership has produced fruitful leaders	Training	11
	Modeling	4
	Empowerment	3
	Praise	2
	Engagement	2
	Delegation	2
	Partnership	2
	Other	4
	Total Responses	24

24 out of 52 participants responded to Qualitative Goal #5

Twenty-eight participants chose not to respond to the statement. The results also reveal that training is the most prominent way that participants have produced fruitful leadership within their context. Modeling was the second most prominent way that participants have produced leadership within their context. Empowerment is the third most prominent way that participants have produced fruitful leaders within their context. Praise, engagement, delegation, and partnership are the least prominent ways that participants have produced fruitful leaders within their context. The other responses include: communication, the Fruit of the Spirit, conflict management, and administration.

Goal #2: Models that Influence Church Growth

The goal that scored sixth in prominence was: “To discover the extent of how leadership models influence church growth.” The average score for the three qualitative statement was 3.68 on a five-point scale.

The three quantitative statements were as followed: I have used the leadership model of building effective teams to influence church growth in my congregation (#2). I have found that leadership as a channel of grace is more effective than management for church growth (#10). I am intentional to ensure that my leadership model cultivates church growth within my ministry assignment (#18). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 6. Goal #2: Models that Influence Church Growth

Project Goals	Average	Responses
18 – I am intentional to ensure that my leadership model cultivates church growth within my ministry assignment.	3.86	52
10- I have found that leadership as a channel of grace is more effective than management for church growth.	3.69	52
2- I have used the leadership model of building effective teams to influence church growth in my congregation.	3.51	52
Composite	3.68	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

For this goal, statement #18 ranked the highest in this goal with a score of 3.86. Fourteen participants responded strongly agree and twenty-six participants responded agree. Nine participants responded neutral, one participant

responded disagree, and two participants responded two strongly disagree.

Leaders are intentional about pursuing a leadership model that cultivates church growth within their ministry assignments.

Statement #10 ranked the second highest in this goal with a score of 3.69. Most participants have found that leadership as a channel of grace is more effective than management for church growth. However, some of the participants had a sense of ambiguity or were not sure what the statement meant for their leadership practices. Thirteen participants responded strongly agree and twenty-one participants responded agree. Thirteen participants responded neutral, four participants responded disagree, and one participant responded strongly disagree.

Statement #2 ranked the lowest in this goal with a score of 3.51. Nine participants responded strongly agree and twenty-six participants responded agree. Ten participants responded neutral, three participants responded disagree, and four participants responded strongly disagree. The results are balanced in a sense. There is a small percentage of leaders who do not use the model of building effective teams while some do and some were unsure if building effective teams was a practice that they each have used.

The qualitative question was: List one or two leadership models that you have used to influence church growth.

Table 6a Goal 2 Church Growth

Question	Responses	
List one or two leadership models that you have used to influence church growth.	Servant Leadership	2
	Outreach	2
	Discipleship	2
	Coaching	2
	Other	16
	Total Responses	22

22 out of 52 participants responded to Qualitative Question #6

Thirty participants chose not to respond to the qualitative statement. The results reveal that servant leadership, outreach, discipleship, and coaching were the most prominent models used by participants to influence church growth. The other responses included are: multiplier, shared, laissez-faire, Thom Rainer, modeling, evangelism, The Nehemiah Plan, the Fruit of the Spirit, “discipleshift,” teamwork, innovation, engagement, small group leadership, charismatic, building leaders, and communication.

Goal #1: Leadership Models Used in the Mid-Atlantic

The goal that scored seventh in prominence is: “To discover the current leadership models within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church.” The average score for the three quantitative statements was 3.65 on a five-point scale.

The three qualitative statements were as followed: My current leadership model includes building effective teams (#1). My current leadership model includes a management strategy (#9). My current leadership model includes a channel of grace (#17). The individual scores of each goal are presented below.

Table 7. Goal #1: Leadership Models Used in the Mid-Atlantic

Project Goals	Average	Responses
17- My current leadership model includes a channel of grace.	4.01	52
1- My current leadership model includes building effective teams.	3.76	52
9- My current leadership model includes a management strategy.	3.19	52
Composite	3.65	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

For this goal, statement #17 scored the highest in this goal. Sixteen participants responded strongly agree and twenty-seven responded agree. Eight participants responded neutral and one participants responded strongly disagree. Overall, most leaders implement a channel of grace within their leadership style.

Statement #1 scored the second highest in this goal. Eighteen participants responded strongly agree and twenty participants responded agree. Eight participants responded neutral, two participants responded disagree and four participants responded strongly disagree. Overall, most leaders build effective teams as a part of their leadership mode. There are also some leaders who do not subscribe to this model within their leadership practices.

Statement #9 scored the lowest in this goal. The results suggest that most of the leaders represented in this study use a management strategy as their leadership model. There are others who disagree with this approach. Seven participants responded strongly agree and thirty-one responded agree. Seven

participants responded neutral, five participants responded disagree, and two participants responded strongly disagree.

The qualitative question for this goal is: List one or two leadership models that you have used within your current ministry assignment.

Table 7a. Goal 1 Leadership Models in the Mid Atlantic

Question	Responses	
List one or two leadership models that you have used within your current ministry assignment.	Coaching	3
	Servant Leadership	2
	Shared Leadership	2
	Mentorship	2
	Other	17
	Total Responses	26

26 participants out of 52 responded to Qualitative Question #7

Twenty- six participants chose not to respond to the statement. The results also reveal that coaching was the most prominent leadership model that participants use within their current ministry assignments. Servant leadership, shared leadership and mentorship were the second most prominent leadership models that participants use within their current ministry assignments. The other responses included were: multipliers, Rick Warren models, discipleship, opportunity, modeling, outreach, situational, delegation, Wesleyan Leadership, Maxwell Leadership, Biblical Leadership, Discipleship, equipping leaders, discernment, guided practice, empowerment, and team building.

Goal #8- Kingdom Models that Cultivate Vision

The goal that scored the lowest in prominence was: “To discover how churches embrace a Kingdom model within their context to cultivate vision.” The average goal for the three qualitative statements was 3.63.

The three qualitative statements were as followed: My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to cultivating vision for the church (#8). My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to leadership for the vision of the church (#16). My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to the context of the church (#24). The individual scores of each statement are listed below.

Table 8. Goal #8: Kingdom Models that Cultivate Vision

Project Goals	Average	Responses
24 – My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to the context of the church.	3.78	52
8- My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to cultivating vision for the church.	3.59	52
16- My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to leadership for vision of the church.	3.53	52
Composite	3.63	N=52
1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.		

For this goal, participants ranked statement #24 as the highest for this goal. Eleven participants responded strongly agree and twenty-five responded agree. Eleven participants responded neutral, three participants responded disagree, and two participants responded strongly disagree. Overall, most of the churches represented embrace a Kingdom model throughout the ministry of the church. Some churches were unsure about what a Kingdom model looks like within the context of the church and a small percentage responded that their church do not embrace a Kingdom model.

Statement #8 scored as the second highest for this goal. Fourteen participants responded strongly agree and twenty-two participants responded agree. Ten participants responded neutral, four participants responded disagree, and two participants responded strongly disagree. Most churches represented embrace a Kingdom model to cultivate vision for the church and there are other churches who do not have a Kingdom focus when cultivating vision for their context. There are others who were unsure if their churches embraced this model to cultivate vision.

Statement #16 scored the lowest for this goal. Twelve participants responded strongly agree and eighteen participants responded agree. Fourteen participants responded neutral, five participants responded disagree, and two participants responded strongly agree. Most churches represented used a Kingdom model to place leaders in the right place to fuel the vision of the church. There are some leaders who do not subscribe to this practice while there are other churches who may not know how to make this practice a reality within their ministry context through the ambiguous responses.

The qualitative question for this goal was: List the ways in which Kingdom models are used within your context to cultivate vision.

Table 8a. Goal 8 A Kingdom Model

Question	Responses	
List the ways in which Kingdom models are used within your context to cultivate vision.	Teaching	2
	Other	10
	Total Responses	12

12 out of 52 participants responded to Qualitative Question #8

Forty participants did not respond to the statement. The results also reveal that teaching is the most prominent Kingdom model that participants used within their context to cultivate vision. The other responses that were stated were: equipping others, holy boldness, multicultural outreach, team building, communication, unity, discipleship, modeling, and solution focused models were named as Kingdom models that were used to cultivate vision.

Conclusion

When considering all of the implications concerning this project, it is evident that participants answered the quantitative statements on a Likert scale, however there were fewer responses given to the open-ended qualitative statements. Those who responded to the statements gave brief insights and it appeared that some of those who responded misunderstood the statement. Overall, participants did not mind engaging in the Likert statements but chose whether or not they wanted to engage in the qualitative statements. There will be further analysis of the data collected in the survey in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS

Prior to starting this project, the demands of bi-vocational ministry were weighing me down. I was also feeling undervalued within my Annual Conference because I was pastoring a small congregation that was in the midst of a spiritual revival while needing upgrades to the building, hampered by a lack of funding. A lot of work was required, but I started to feel as if I was unable to fulfill all of the demands while not feeling fully supported by Episcopal leadership. I felt that I was working hard but it was going unnoticed, which caused me to become frustrated in ministry. I was also working full-time as a mental health therapist within a school setting in Baltimore County, Maryland as well as an office-based therapist at the main clinical office.

As a result, I found it difficult to sustain effective pastoral ministry while managing the demands of being an ethical clinician. The school that I was working at became a toxic environment and I did not want to come to work. I was frustrated at least four out of five days of the work week which impacted every other area in my life. As a result, I knew that something needed to change in my life ministerially and professionally, but I did not know what or when that change would happen.

One Tuesday afternoon, I received a call from my Bishop's Administrative Assistant to come to his office immediately. I left my job and drove towards the Episcopal Office. I was extremely nervous and did not know what the meeting would be about. As I was getting closer to the Episcopal Office, a still, small voice

spoke and said, “Your change is coming.” I called my wife and my mother to process what I had just heard. They both prayed with me before I entered into the office. I arrived at 3pm and by 3:10pm, the Bishop shared with me that he was moving me to Pittsburgh to follow a deceased Pastor which would mean that I would be a full-time Pastor. He shared his reservations but was confident that I was able to pastor the congregation effectively. He even shared how he was proud of the ministry that I was doing at the smaller congregation which confirmed that I was able to handle this new assignment. The conversation also revealed to me that my Bishop valued my leadership even though I did not recognize that truth. After the conversation, I started to feel affirmed and empowered.

As a result of that conversation and my transition to Pittsburgh, my project has allowed me to reflect and reimagine what transformational leadership looks like within a congregational setting in the twenty-first century. It also gave me a hunger to want to discover what leadership models were being implemented within my denominational setting currently while seeking to discover new models that would produce fruit within the context of the Church. I realized that every pastoral appointment and professional position I have experienced has prepared me for my current pastoral assignment as well as for the consultant roles that I function in throughout the city of Pittsburgh.

Project Goals

The purpose of this project was to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District of the

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The research question was: To what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church? The specific project goals were:

1. To discover the current leadership models within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church.
2. To discover the extent of how leadership models influence church growth.
3. To discover the extent to which church leaders allow the Spirit to guide their leadership models.
4. To discover the extent to which church leaders engage in the community as part of their leadership model.
5. To discover the extent of how the current leadership models produce fruitful leaders.
6. To discover the extent to which church leaders mentor the next generation for leadership.
7. To discover leadership styles that contribute to a church growth model.
8. To discover how churches embrace a Kingdom model within their context to cultivate vision

In response to those goals, the completed surveys indicated that on a five-point forced-choice survey, none of the individual statements scored below 3.50.

The scale that was used was a Likert Scale which is represented below:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The goals in order of prominence of findings were: Goal #6 (4.37), Goal #3 (4.19), Goal #4 (3.93), Goal #7 (3.85), Goal #5 (3.76), Goal #2 (3.68), Goal #1 (3.65), and Goal #8 (3.63). Nine of the twenty-four quantitative statements in the entire survey scored 4.0 or higher. Fifteen of the twenty-four quantitative statements in the entire survey scored below 4.0.

Goal #6 Mentoring the Next Generation for Leadership

It was good to see that current leaders are open to genuine mentorship for the next generation for leadership in statement #6. The score for this statement was 4.40. Thirty-two out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed that it was their responsibility to offer genuine mentorship for the next generation. Mentoring the next generation will contribute to the vitality and health of the Church moving forward.

Statement #22, "I believe in investing in a new generation of leaders through mentorship" scored .2 points lower than statement #6. Statement #22 relates to the investment that current leaders must make to mentor the next generation. Thirty out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with the statement. Findings suggest that the majority of the respondents felt that investing time, talent, and treasure in a new generation of leaders was extremely important so that transformational leadership models could continue throughout generations to come. Additionally, statement #14, "I enjoy mentoring the next generation of leaders" was ranked .12 points lower than statement 6 and .2 points lower than statement #22. Twenty-seven out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with the statement which suggests that some leaders truly enjoy and are passionate

about mentoring the next generation of leaders. It is not seen as an obligation, but it is an authentic and enjoyable responsibility. Therefore, it is extremely encouraging and enlightening to see that current leaders do see the importance of mentoring the next generation for leadership.

The qualitative question for this goal was: List the ways in which you are invested in the next generation of leaders. There were twenty-five responses. The responses to the qualitative question from the participants included mentorship, engagement, modeling, training, encouragement, and shared leadership. Most respondents used mentorship methods to invest into the next generation. The next highest response was engagement. Some of the single responses from participants were support and a willingness to be teachable. The findings reveal that leaders have used very practical and effective ways to invest in the next generation. The goal information relates to the research in Chapter Three when June and Mathis suggests that, “One must learn and develop leaders through spirituality, evangelism, respect for authority, moral purity, physical purity, propriety, responsibility, and relational skills” (June and Mathis 2013, 198).

Goal #3 Allowing the Spirit’s Guidance in Leadership

This goal presented positive feedback concerning the Spirit’s role as a guide in leadership. The statements that ranked the highest were statements #3 and #19 as they both scored at 4.25. In Statement #3, “I am open to the Spirit’s guidance when I implement my leadership model,” and Statement #19, “I allow the wisdom that comes from the Spirit to guide my approaches to leadership,” the

responses reveal that thirty-four out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #3 and twenty-eight out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #19. The findings suggest that there is an openness to the Spirit while revealing the result of being open to the Spirit which is wisdom to implement various leadership models.

The statement that ranked the lowest of the three was statement #2, “I use spiritual discernment when executing my leadership model within my context”. This statement scored .16 lower than statements #3 and #19, not a large difference. Twenty-three out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #2. It is a positive sign to see that some leaders use discernment when executing their leadership models within their context. Every context is different and has its own set of challenges as well as opportunities so leaders must discern what is necessary for that particular context.

The qualitative question for this goal was: List the ways in which you have allowed the Spirit to guide your approach to leadership. Twenty-five out of fifty-two participants responded to the qualitative question. The responses to the qualitative question from participants included prayer, discernment, spiritual disciplines, modeling, and active listening. Prayer ranked the highest with fifteen responses. The results reveal that prayer is very important when seeking to allow the Spirit to guide leadership models. Prayer centers the leaders and creates a dialogue with God so that He can download the wisdom and the discernment necessary to lead. The second highest response was discernment which reveals

once again that leaders believe that discernment is a very powerful tool when allowing the Spirit to guide leadership practices.

The individual responses included obedience and communication. I am not sure what the participant meant by communication, but I do understand how obedience to the Spirit contributes to becoming open to the Spirit's guidance. The goal information relates to the research in chapter three when Berlin and Weems suggest that, "The essential element for fruitful church leadership is the discernment and implementation of God's vision for a community of faith... Fruitful leadership is possible only through the power of God" (Berlin and Weems 2011, 36). The gift of the Spirit which includes discernment is extremely pivotal for fruit to be borne within the Church context.

Goal #4 Community Engagement

This goal gave participants an opportunity to report on their community engagement efforts as a leader. Statement #20, "I am engaged in a ministry that is open to moving beyond the walls of the church in response to my leadership model," scored 4.15 which is the highest ranked statement of the three in this goal. Twenty-four out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #20 which reveals that some leaders are leading or engaged in a ministry that is open to moving beyond the walls in response to the leadership model that they use. Statement #4, "I am engaged in my community to assess the needs" was the second highest statement scored at 3.86. Seventeen out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #20. The findings reveal that a good portion of leaders assess the needs within their community through engagement.

The lowest statement scored 3.78 which is statement #12, “ I am engaged in my community as a leader.” Eleven out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #12. The findings reveal that a small percentage of leaders are actually engaging within their community as a leader. This presents a concern that many leaders do not see the importance of not being confined to a building to pursue the mission of God through intentional community engagement which mirrors the life of Christ. Also, pastors have a limited time to pursue community engagement due to various demands within their local setting. Some pastors also do not live in the community where they serve which sometimes serves as a hindrance to become involved in the community. Also, some pastors are bi-vocational and are unable to get involved in their communities due to their work schedules.

The qualitative statement was: List two ways that you have included community engagement within your leadership model for your ministry. Twenty-three out of fifty-two participants responded to the qualitative statement. The responses to this qualitative statement from the participants included engagement, partnerships, social justice initiatives, and advocacy. Engagement was the highest response from participants, however, engagement is a broad statement and participants did not explain what type of engagement took place within their context. Partnership scored the second highest response from participants but those participants did not expound upon the types of partnerships within their community. It must be noted that social justice and

advocacy was prominent within the findings as a way of engaging with the community which is very important to the Black Church.

Some of the individual responses included: men's and women's retreats, fellowships, and sharing resources. Men's and women's retreats are meaningful but I do not believe that it truly engages the community to its fullest extent. However, I do believe that fellowships and sharing resources are meaningful tools to pursue community engagement. The goal information relates to the research in chapter three when Tribble states that, "A new vision of black pastoral leadership is needed...when many denominational black congregations are struggling to fulfill their priestly and prophetic functions in communities that really need the spiritual and social services that these congregations provide" (Tribble 2005, 7).

Goal #7 Church Growth

This goal gave respondents the opportunity to report if their leadership styles contributed to church growth. The statement that ranked the highest with a score of 4.03 was statement #7, "My leadership style understands the implications of church growth within my context." Twelve out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #7. The findings reveal that a small group of leaders actually understand what church growth looks like within their context. The second highest statement was statement #15, "My leadership style cultivates church growth within my context" which scored at 3.82. Nine out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #5. The findings also reveal

that a small percentage of leaders actually believe that their leadership styles cultivate church growth within their context.

The statement that scored the lowest at 3.71 was statement #23, “My leadership style sustains church growth within my context.” Eight out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with this statement. Leaders for the most part did not connect with how their leadership style sustains church growth. This also presents a concern as to how leaders may not understand in what ways their leadership style impacts church growth both positively and negatively. This question might have a lower response due to the overall lack of growth in the church of today, rather than the specific leadership style of the pastor.

The qualitative question was: List the ways your leadership style has both cultivated and sustained church growth. Sixteen out of fifty-two participants responded to this question which is a lower qualitative response than other questions. Some of the responses from participants included consistency, modeling, affirmation, inclusion and training. Consistency was the highest response from participants to the qualitative question which revealed that when leaders are consistent, church growth is cultivated and sustained. Modeling was the second highest response from participants which also reveals that leaders believe that modeling good behavior or practices cultivates and sustains church growth. The results are low which also speaks to the fact that leaders may not understand how to cultivate and sustain church growth within their context. Some participants understood and could explain what that looks like while many avoided the conversation all together.

Some of the individual responses included: opportunity, creating systems, small group leadership, contextual understanding and multiplier. These responses reveal that providing an atmosphere of opportunity while creating systems and providing small group leadership results in understanding the context, which causes leaders to be multiplied. Even though individual responses were few, those who did respond add to the conversation of characteristics and practices that will cultivate and sustain church growth. The goal information relates to the leadership in chapter three when Blackaby and Blackaby state, “Great leaders multiply their efforts by developing teams . . . this must be one of a leader’s top priorities” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 294). The multiplication of leaders sustains church growth because a team approach has been cultivated through creating systems and new opportunities, where both consistency and modeling are embodied.

Goal #5: Producing Fruitful Leaders

This goal gave respondents the opportunity to discover if their leadership models produced fruitful leaders. The statement that ranked the highest with a score of 3.86 was statement #5, “The model that I currently use suggests that I understand what it means to be a fruitful leader.” Eleven out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #5. Participants have a limited understanding about what it means to be a fruitful leader as well as the responsibility to produce leaders who will continue the healthy leadership practices.

Statement #13, “The model that I currently use has been proven effective for leadership development” which scored 3.82 which was .4 points lower than the highest ranked goal. Seven out of fifty-two respondents strongly agreed with statement #13. The results reveal that the leaders represented in this discovery project somewhat believe that their leadership model has been proven effective for leadership development. This presents a slight concern that most church leaders represented in this study do not fully understand their role to develop leaders and that their approach has been proven effective. Statement #21, “The model that I currently use has produced fruitful leaders in my context,” ranked the lowest with a score of 3.67 which was .15 points lower than Statement #13. Five out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #21. Fruitful leaders have been produced contextually according to the respondents. This goal reveals that leaders do take producing fruitful leaders somewhat seriously.

The qualitative question was: “List ways in which your current leadership has produced fruitful leaders.” Twenty-four out of fifty-two participants responded to this qualitative question. The results revealed that training was the most prominent way that leaders produced fruitful leaders. Some of the other responses included modeling, empowerment, praise, engagement, delegation and partnership. The respondents had a good idea concerning how to produce fruitful leaders. Even though only twenty-four responded, it is safe to ascertain that some leaders understand what it takes to produce fruitful leaders.

Some of the individual responses included communication, the fruit of the Spirit, conflict management, and administration. In my opinion, the individual

responses are meaningful and can contribute to the production of fruitful leaders but these responses are surface level answers and there may have been some misunderstanding concerning the question. Overall, a few tools were presented concerning how to produce fruitful leadership. The goal relates to the research in Chapter 3 when Berlin and Weems suggest that, “church leaders are called to be faithful and fruitful” (Berlin and Weems 2011, 19).

Goal #2: Models that Influence Church Growth

The respondents were given the opportunity to reflect upon how their leadership models produced church growth. Statement # 18 ranked the highest in this section with a score of 3.86, “I am intentional to ensure that my leadership model cultivates church growth within my ministry assignment.” Fourteen out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #18. Some respondents believed that they were intentional about ensuring that their leadership models cultivated church growth. There is a sense of intentionality from the leader’s perspective to ensure that their leadership model is impacting to life as well as the vitality of the Church.

Statement #10, “I have found that leadership as a channel of grace is more effective than management for church growth” ranked the second highest with a score of 3.69 which is .17 points lower than Statement #18. Thirteen out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #10. Some leaders believe that a channel of grace approach is more effective than a management strategy in the context of church leadership. Statement #2, “I have used the leadership model of building effective teams to influence church growth in my congregation”

which scored 3.51 which is .18 points lower than Statement #10. Nine out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #2. Respondents slightly implemented building effective teams to influence church growth and vitality.

The qualitative question was: List one or two leadership models that you have used to influence church growth. Twenty-two out of fifty-two responded to this qualitative question. The most prominent responses were servant leadership, outreach, discipleship and coaching. Two participants recorded each of those responses. It should be noted that possibly participants did not understand the qualitative question. Some of the responses do not connect with what the question asked for. Other participants also chose to skip over the question maybe because of how long the survey was at this point or because of misunderstanding.

Some of the individual responses included multiplier, shared, laissez-faire, Thom Rainer, modeling, evangelism, The Nehemiah Plan, the Fruit of the Spirit, discipleship, teamwork, innovation, engagement, small group leadership, charismatic, building leaders, and communication. Once again, some of the answers connected to the question but many did not appear to connect, so there may have been miscommunication concerning the intent of the qualitative question. The goal information relates to the research found in Chapter Three when Weems believes that “leadership growing out of administration and management have been proven inadequate. Management and administration are necessary but there must be vision and values in this context (Weems 2010, 13).

Goal #1: Leadership Models Used in the Mid-Atlantic

The respondents were given the opportunity to assess the leadership models that they currently use. Statement #17 was ranked the highest, “My current leadership model includes a channel of grace” with a score of 4.01. Sixteen out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #17. Participants somewhat believed that their leadership model included a channel of grace. Statement #1, “My current leadership model includes building effective teams” which ranked the second highest with a score of 3.76 which is .25 points lower than Statement #17. Eighteen out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #1. Some of the participants subscribed to the notion that building effective teams was a relevant leadership model to use.

Statement #9, “My current leadership model includes a management strategy” ranked as the lowest statement with a score of 3.19 which was .57 points lower than Statement #1. Seven participants strongly agreed with statement #9. There was a significant drop concerning this statement which suggests that only some participants used management as their leadership model.

The qualitative question for this goal was: List one or two leadership models that you have used within your current ministry assignment. Twenty-six out of fifty-two participants responded to this question. Coaching ranked as the most prominent response from the participants. Servant leadership, shared leadership, and mentorship ranked as the second highest responses. Each of these responses connect to the qualitative question so leaders understand what

their model is overall. However, the limited responses also reveal that participants chose not to answer or they did not know their leadership model.

Some of the individual responses included: multipliers, Rick Warren models, discipleship, opportunity, modeling, outreach, situational, delegation, Wesleyan Leadership, Maxwell Leadership, Biblical Leadership, Discipleship, equipping leaders, discernment, guided practice, empowerment, and team building. In my opinion, some of these responses do not connect to the question, and participants may have recorded some of the activities that they do or what they have seen. The Rick Warren and Maxwell Leadership models were not carefully explained so those responses are vague. Therefore, some understand their models while others are still unclear. The goal information relates to the research found in Chapter 3 when Weems states that “Leadership becomes a channel of God’s grace as we help God’s people discern to what God is calling them and help them take that next faithful step” (Weems 2010, 1).

Goal #8: Kingdom Models that Cultivate Vision

This goal gave participants the opportunity to assess how they implement Kingdom models. Statement #24, “My Church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to the context of the church” ranked the highest with a score of 3.78. Eleven out of fifty-two participants strongly agreed with statement #24. The results reveal that some participants attend a church that embraces a Kingdom model. Statement #8, “My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to cultivating vision for the church” ranked the second highest statement with a score of 3.59 which is .19 points lower than Statement # 24. Fourteen out of fifty-

two participants strongly agreed with statement #8. Some of the participants attend or lead a church that uses a Kingdom model and focus to cultivate vision for the church.

Statement #16, “My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to leadership for the vision of the church” is the lowest ranked statement with a score of 3.53 which is .06 lower than Statement #8. Twelve participants strongly agreed with statement #16. The results reveal that some churches embrace a Kingdom model from a leadership standpoint for the vision as well as the direction for the church.

The qualitative statement for this goal is: List the ways in which Kingdom models are used within your context to cultivate vision. Only twelve out of fifty-two participants responded to this qualitative statement which is low. The highest ranked statement only had two persons respond to it which is teaching. The other individual responses were equipping others, holy boldness, multicultural outreach, team building, communication, unity, discipleship, modeling, and solution focused models. It is evident that there is a misunderstanding concerning what a Kingdom model is and how it is implemented. Participants did not understand the question and in all honesty, I could have explained it more thoroughly. Kingdom models are lacking within the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District because leaders do not know what the Kingdom is and how it should be implemented in the context of the Church. From the results, it opens up the door for further research. The goal information relates to the research found in Chapter Three when Chand speaks to the fact that, “The Kingdom cannot be

manifested in the Church context until the culture is ready to handle it” (Chand, 2011, 10).

Overall, the results of each goal reveal that participants have a basic understanding as it relates to leadership models, but there are also many opportunities for growth. It is evident that understanding the Kingdom of God and how to implement that in the context of the Church is a true struggle. The results revealed the current condition of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District but also gives us direction for what we need to work on.

Application

The purpose of this project was to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. We wanted to show the importance of understanding leadership models with impactful implementation strategies. The hope was that clergy and lay leaders would become self-aware of their own leadership model and how it impacts those who follow their leadership. The hope was also for clergy and lay leaders to understand biblical, historical, theological, and contemporary perspectives of what fruitful leadership should look like in the twenty-first century. The aspiration was for clergy and lay leaders to rethink how they are currently providing meaningful services and resources to their context so their leadership can be enhanced to meet the needs of future generations. The application of this project resulted in leaders truly examining what they each currently provide, while asking questions about how they can sharpen their leadership models to be more effective.

Additionally, the desired application of this project is to share the findings within a book and also in the form of trainings, workshops, and seminars for clergy and lay leaders around the country. Even though the findings pertained to the Black Church, I believe that all church leadership could benefit. I also envision launching a Limited Liability Company called, Fruitful Living, LLC which will provide consulting services and professional development to churches and leaders. Some of the topics for the seminars and workshops will be: Fruitful Leadership, Liberation Theology in the Twenty-First Century, and How to Cultivate a Kingdom Culture. Other services will be provided as well through this LLC, but this project impressed the idea to implement the project moving forward.

The project application definitely benefits my context. I will be using the information discovered through the biblical, historical, theological, and contemporary foundations to train leaders within my church. I have discovered that throughout the years there has been a lack of leadership development. This project also exposed a few weak areas in my ministry context, so I will be using the discoveries to strengthen those areas through intentional quarterly leadership development sessions. I also plan to train leaders within my Annual Conference using the various models presented in the literature and empowering pastors to develop a strategy for continuous leadership development.

This project has helped me to rediscover my passion for authentic ministry and the practical application of what Jesus originally intended for the Church. It has awakened my spiritual senses to discern where the Church Universal has

become distracted as well as complacent. However, there are areas that I believe need further study as it relates to this project.

Further Study

One alarming reality that we cannot ignore is that as I was writing and seeking to launch this project, America experienced a pandemic which shook the nation; but it particularly shook the Church. Spiritual leaders and congregations were forced to leave their buildings and to do ministry in a virtual manner. This reality invoked much fear as well as uncertainty. Churches who had avoided technology were forced to embrace it. Leaders were challenged to keep congregants engaged even in the midst of this virtual reality.

Also, the pandemic has challenged the country to live in a new normal. The Church is also challenged to do ministry within this new normal. Therefore, I believe that there needs to be further study concerning how to implement transformative leadership models in the midst of crisis. The pandemic is a new reality so there is not any literature on this topic at this time.

Another area of further study would be leadership models that engage millennials and/or future generations. The Church continues to be challenged with the task of engaging future generations. Within my context, I have not seen consistent models that engage millennials and future generations. I do not see the same passion that previous generations had as it relates to pouring into the next generation of leaders. I spoke very briefly about engaging and mentoring another generation, but focusing on millennial engagement within the context of the Church could be expanded. Further study in leadership would be meaningful.

The last aspect of further study would be the liberation and womanist theological models of leadership. Within my theological section, I discuss liberation theology which included womanist theology and black liberation theology. I believe that further study could be explored regarding leadership within a liberation theological lens in particular. In light of the events of the death of George Floyd and the violence associated with that traumatic experience as well as Breonna Taylor and others, I believe there are opportunities to expand social justice work through a leadership lens as well (Funders for Justice 2020, 1). There are many studies that briefly discuss the precepts of liberation theology and how it connects to social justice, but there is so much opportunity to use liberation theology as a way to explore what leadership looks like in a frustrated, fatigued, and angry cultural space. I would even encourage further exploration concerning James Cone's framework and how it relates to leadership.

Personal Goals

I have been in the preaching ministry for sixteen years, and I have served in the role of Senior Pastor for five years. It was my desire to help clergy and lay leaders become equipped through transformative leadership approaches to lead the Church in the twenty-first century. This project stretched me spiritually, emotionally, and even professionally. God was a major force and the guide throughout the project, and my desire was to please Him at all costs.

My personal goals were:

1. I will become an agent of liberation within my context and abroad through more communal engagement.

2. I will become more intentional embodying Christ by becoming more Kingdom focused by meditation and studying on Jesus' focus on the Kingdom.
3. I will assess and practice how I can become a more fruitful leader by personal reflection and critical thinking.

Goal 1: Becoming an Agent of Liberation through Community Engagement

When I pastored in the Maryland area which was where I pastored the first two years of being a part of the Doctor of Ministry Program, I felt very disconnected from the community. Prince George's County in Maryland was a place where there was much competition and isolation when it related to the context and even the Church. I wanted to do so much with the community leaders, but those leaders were not responsive. Pastors did not want to partner with one another. Also, it was a very suburban context, so it was assumed that the community did not have any needs. However, I felt a strong burden to become an agent of liberation.

When I relocated to Pittsburgh and was assigned to the Homewood Borough of Pittsburgh, I felt an instant connection and felt like I could find my place as an agent of liberation through community engagement. Homewood is an urban community that has a very negative reputation throughout the city. There is a lot of crime and poverty represented. So there have been major opportunities to engage with our community. When I arrived, I made it a point to meet with key leaders within the community. I wanted to meet with those who are making a

major difference in Homewood and began to establish partnerships. This initiative caused my project to form and take shape.

As a result, our church has been invited to the table to speak out on issues within our community. Our church is now seen as a resource for the community. I joined the Ministerial Association and became the Treasurer, so it gave me an opportunity to understand the context and given the opportunity to speak as well as embody a prophetic witness within our community. I also had the opportunity to participate in the church-led response to the George Floyd murder. I was also a leader in commemorating the Emanuel Nine Massacre as a public witness towards racial reconciliation. I believe that I have reached this goal and will continue to experience growth toward this goal, so that our ministry can be seen as a station for liberation through community engagement

Goal 2: Embodying Jesus' Focus on the Kingdom

I have been fascinated by the concept of the Kingdom of God and what that looks like within the context of the Church. So while this project was unfolding, I began studying Jesus' focus on the Kingdom by reading as well as meditating on the Gospels. My spirit was enlightened and illuminated which encouraged me to want to be like Christ even more. I was then compelled to share what I was studying and meditating on with my Church.

Beginning in the Fall of 2019, I began teaching the Gospel of Matthew for Bible Study. We are currently in this study, and it has become very transformative for me personally but it has also impacted my Church. We planned to finish the Gospel of Matthew in the summer, and then in the Fall of

2020 we will start engaging with the Gospel of Mark. The Gospels reveal who Jesus is and what His mission was. The Gospels also call us to take His mission as our own. Therefore, reading and studying the Gospels has commissioned me to embody the Kingdom of God.

My study time would be on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Sundays. There were days when my study time would be altered because of many responsibilities, but I tried to address any distraction throughout this formational experience. However, I am extremely committed currently as well as moving forward to become more Kingdom focused. I believe that I started to reach this personal goal, but I do have more to learn and embody through personal study.

Goal 3: Practicing Fruitful Leadership

I consider myself to be a very mild-mannered person. I am also one who does not like to offend anyone or to start conflict. I have been seen as non-confrontational and “too soft” in my approach to leadership while others enjoy my loving demeanor as a leader. However, as I was engaging in this project through reading, research, and writing, I noticed that I needed to strengthen my leadership skills. There were aspects of my leadership that I needed to attack head on before things become chaotic within my congregational setting. I have always struggled with being accepted and loved as a leader that I avoided a few things to keep a positive morale. However, through this project I started to reflect upon my leadership style and began to assess if I was a fruitful leader or not. Within my own critical thinking, I realized that I had very strong attributes of being a fruitful leader, but I also had weak areas that I needed to sharpen.

In light of this increased self-awareness, I enrolled in a leadership class led by Matthew Stevenson called, “Evolutionary Leadership” while designing and launching this project. Stevenson’s confirmed things for me but also convicted me in areas where I needed to grow. From that class I received the courage to confront those weak areas in my leadership. Also the congregation that I have served since May 2019 has given me a “tough skin” so that I can be the leader that they need to take them even further. I have been intentional about this personal goal, but will continue to work through this goal so I can continue to become the leader that I have been destined to become.

Conclusion

I always knew that God wanted me to pursue an advanced degree within the context of pastoral ministry. My journey to Ashland was definitely Spirit-led because I was delayed from pursuing my dream of the Doctor of Ministry program. I eventually discovered that my dream program was not for me and was encouraged through a ministry colleague to pursue the Doctor of Ministry program at Ashland. The process was smooth and when I was accepted, God started to speak to me about my project and led me to read John 15 in its entirety. From that passage, the Lord spoke to me about exploring fruitful leadership within the context of African Methodism.

As I was observing the state of the AME Zion Church and how I sensed decline, it caused me to wonder what the problem was. The resolution definitely was to become a healthy denomination once again, but I struggled with the unhealthy root. The unhealthy root that I began to notice was that there were

unfruitful leadership approaches being implemented and there were also evidences of no leadership which impacted congregations across the connection. However, I have discovered that there is a major difference between simply leadership and fruitful leadership which produces even more fruit throughout generations. I believe that fruitful leadership models are proven effective for the vitality of the Church Universal.

As a Senior Pastor in the AME Zion Church, I am looking at implementing these leadership approaches within my context because I believe it is my responsibility to do so as a transformative leader. My current context was considered a pastor-driven church which means that the pastor did everything in the church without a secretary and the leaders who were appointed were not empowered to lead. Therefore, I am seeking to reshape the paradigm of our Church and to begin using these principles to empower persons for leadership. It is as if Homewood will be a pilot for implementing leadership models that produce fruit. I am already expecting that fruitful leaders will arise within my congregation to make ministry happen in meaningful ways.

I am very passionate about seeing fruit that will last within the Black Church and within the Church as a whole moving forward. It is my hope that clergy and lay leaders will use some of these models within their context to train and empower fruitful leaders so that the Kingdom will be advanced. I pray that clergy and lay leaders will keep in mind their responsibility to be fruit bearers and to be led by the fruit of the Spirit. I also pray that clergy and lay leaders will embrace ways to minister in their context using liberation theology and the

ministry of the Holy Spirit. Finally, I also pray that these leaders will apply the contemporary perspectives presented to shape their leadership from now into the future.

APPENDIX ONE

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DISCOVERING LEADERSHIP MODELS THAT PRODUCE FRUIT IN THE MID
ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT IN THE AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

A PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ASHLAND
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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ASHLAND, OHIO

NOVEMBER 5, 2019

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this project is to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The research question is: To what extent are leadership models that produce fruit utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church?

Overview

This project is intended to discover leadership models that contribute to church growth in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church context by assessing the perspectives of church leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church. The participants will be surveyed using an online assessment tool to discover leadership models that impact growth and effectiveness. I will assess the results using a compilation tool and if the results are unclear then face to face interviews will be conducted.

This project is designed to discover factors that cultivate continuous growth for the twenty first century church within the African Methodist context through effective leadership models. It is my intent that this discovery project will provide some of the answers to the questions that clergy and lay leaders have been asking concerning how to keep the church vibrant and effective in a post-church culture. I believe that this project will give us the answers to our questions from a leadership perspective needed to bring healing and liberation to the decline taking place in Christendom.

Foundations

Leadership is a very important component as it relates to church growth and development. I believe that fruitful ministry is dependent upon transformative leadership models. The foundation of the Church began with Jesus who was a transformative leader and Scripture records how the Church was established through transformative leaders such as Paul, Timothy, and Titus. Therefore, leadership is very important when assessing and discovering the modalities that lead towards vibrancy within the Kingdom of God.

The Church will always stand but decline is a reality in various periods of history and is occurring in today's western world. The culture of our society is changing very rapidly and the Church must catch up to the change to ensure relevance as well as progress. Transformative leadership is a necessity to lead congregations

In our context today, church leaders use different models while others may not use any models at all. Therefore, we must discover which models are effective to produce fruitful ministry moving forward. The foundations of this paper will include a summation of my personal background which serves as my motivation to pursue this project. The foundations will also include a biblical, theological, historical and contemporary summary of how leadership should produce fruit in the 21st Century Church.

Personal Foundation

I have been a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church all of my life. My maternal family raised me in the Church and I was a part of the

children's ministry growing up. We did not have a vibrant youth ministry so I chose to go to another church to attend their youth group. However, I attended most of the local, district, conference, and connectional meetings for our denomination because my mother was very active in the Missionary Society. She was the leader for missionaries for twenty years so I observed her commitment, passion, and effectiveness as a leader. My mother was a transformative leader and I saw the fruit of her ministry but I also learned that not every leader is like my mother.

Growing up, I was a part of vibrant ministries. Each church that I attended before pastoring were pretty large and ministries were meeting the needs of the context. I saw leaders serious about their responsibilities and intentional about glorifying God. Of course, every church has its challenges and there were some areas of ineffectiveness but overall each church presented as a healthy congregation. So my spiritual worldview concerning the church had been vibrancy. However, I had a limited worldview because I was not exposed to the "behind the scenes" reality.

When I began pastoring, I started to see the "behind the scenes" reality that the churches in our denomination were actually in decline. Many put on a "front" that they are vibrant so that they can impress the Bishop but in reality, they are in decline. Every church that I have been sent to in my pastoral ministry has been in decline. One church had no building and no members, and I was charged to replant the church with no resources from our denomination. The second church that I was sent to experience a major decline financially,

numerically, and spiritually and the current church that I was assigned to was in decline once again which caused the church to suffer financially, spiritually, numerically, and even physically. So we are in the process of moving towards becoming a healthy church again.

These situations are examples of how the AME Zion Church is in decline in both suburban and urban settings. My hypothesis concerning the root of the problem is leadership. The lack of transformative and relevant leaders contributes to the issue at hand. The foundation of the AME Zion Church was a powerful movement in the late 1700s- the 1990s. The reason why our denomination was thriving was because of effective leadership but those leaders did not bear fruit and did not prepare the next generation due to cultural changes as well as intimidation among other factors. Therefore, in the 21st century we see decline and so much apathy in our great church which grieves me. Something must be done!

This study will focus on assessing and discovering leadership models which will produce fruit in the 21st century Church. The study will diagnose the problem while offering viable and effective solutions which will benefit the AME Zion Church moving forward. It will benefit both clergy and lay leaders as a blueprint as well as a strategy to bring meaningful change to how we operate as a church so that we can be agents of change and transformation.

Biblical Foundation

The biblical foundation will consider the following scriptural passages: John 15:1-17 and Galatians 5:22-26. Through a careful examination of the

sacred text, fruit is described as something that is healthy and a source of evidence to assess effectiveness. For the consideration of this project, the imagery of fruit will be used to assess effectiveness, holistic health, and characteristics of believers in Jesus Christ.

When examining the Johannine text on a deeper level, Jesus uses an agriculture image because he was speaking to people who were familiar with the vine because their source of food came from the vine (Collins 2016, 48). However, there is deeper significance to the vine language. In the Old Testament there is a recurring image of the vine which represents the people of God. The vine here is Israel...God planted Israel to be the “true” vine, intending them to bear fruit (Collins 2016, 48). Fruit-bearing from a prophetic Old Testament point of view reveals to us that bearing fruit exemplifies a life of faithfulness as God brings His light to the world. Israel is the Lord’s servant and the Messiah is also the Lord’s servant (Collins 2016, 48). The theme of spiritual growth, fruit bearing, and harvest correlates [in the Gospels] (Choi 2000, 54).

Commentators reveal various images that are portrayed in the John 15 texts. John 15:1-17 calls the contemporary Christian church concerning self-identity and community. Self-identity is cultivated through the community. Community is displayed as interrelationship, mutuality, and indwelling (O’Day 1995, 760). Individual branches depend on its relationship to the vine and to the other branches. The vine is a radically non-hierarchal model and branches are only distinguishable by the fruit that they bear. “For John each individual is rooted in Jesus and hence gives up individual status to become one of many encircling

branches as a community” (O’Day 1995, 760). Fruitful leadership is implemented most effectively within a community framework.

The imagery of the vine is compatible with the continuation of the Israel-Church as the people of God (Murray 1987, 289). This image can only emerge through the redemptive ministry of Christ and how it liberates humanity.

Therefore, the Vine includes believers from every nation which confirms the power of community once again within transformative leadership practices (Murray 1987, 289).

On the other hand, as we examine the context of Galatians, we as readers must note that Paul is trying to draw a picture of the character of the Christian community as he is writing about the fruit of the Spirit. He argues that the characteristics of a Christian life is a result of our redemption (Bartlett 2016, 7). The only thing that constrains one from living in the Spirit from Paul’s perspective is the flesh (Osiek 2012,574). Paul believed that the age of the flesh or life in the flesh was guided by selfishness, self-absorption, self- promotion or inappropriate pride (Bartlett 2016, 10).

“When it comes to living by the Spirit, the proper word for practice of life under the Holy Spirit is fruit” (Bartlett 2016, 11). Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are the result of the spiritual life. The fruit of the Spirit springs from a life grounded upon faith. So the fruit of the Spirit portrays what life in the Spirit looks like, what life is that builds community, life that is seeded, nurtured, and brought forth by the

goodness of God (Bartlett 2016, 11). Leadership that is fruitful is a portrait of a spiritual life.

The fruit of the Spirit contrast from the works of the flesh because the fruit of the Spirit is the lifestyle of those who are indwelt and energized by the Spirit (Bruce 1982, 251). The fruit of the Spirit also fosters the disruptive behavior that the flesh produces because it is the fruit of that divine nature which God gives as a result of what he has done in and by Christ (Bruce 1982, 255). Living by the Spirit has positive results because commitment to God through Christ causes one to take on a new orientation which informs leadership practices. (Longenecker 1990, 266-267)

Theological Foundation

The main theological themes emphasized in this section are liberation theology and pneumatology. These themes enable us to experience the fruit that leadership has to offer. Jesus offers a ministry of liberation for all and promises that once He had ascended that the disciples would receive a Comforter as well as power from on high. The biblical text reveals that Jesus' ministry was liberating and filled with the Spirit which emphasizes how liberation and pneumatology leads the Church in the 21st century towards transformative leadership.

Scripture which informs our theology expresses how Jesus was anointed by the power of the Spirit (pneumatology) and was sent to bring liberation. This is the divine assignment of Jesus and the Church is challenged to be the embodiment of Christ in the earth realm. A ministry of liberation empowered by

the Spirit was the recipe for His transformative leadership approach which ultimately caused the Christian movement to spread.

James Cone is the noted theologian who originated the theological perspective called “Liberation Theology.” This theological perspective was embraced initially by the African American community. Therefore, African Methodism stands on the premise and is our hermeneutical lens concerning how we approach both scripture as well as the ministry that we offer. “I do think that it is impossible to do Christian theology with integrity in America without asking the question, What has the gospel to do with the black struggle for liberation?” (Cone 1997, 20).

Cone emphasizes how Jesus is a liberator and intentional about offering freedom to the oppressed. “The acceptance of the gift of freedom transforms our perception of our social and political existence” (Cone 1997, 33). Liberation is a mindset and it is an identity. Theologically, the Church is challenged to offer liberation which changes person’s identity from oppression to freedom which is evidence of fruit.

Another component or aspect of liberation theology is Black Womanist Theology. Black Womanist theology seeks to dispel injustice not just from a racial perspective but also from a class and gender perspective as well (Townes 2011, 159). This theological point of reference provides both challenge and prescriptive solutions. Therefore, Womanist theology challenges the Black Church to examine the oppressive messages it gives both consciously and unconsciously to Black peoples. These messages include ageism, classism, colorism,

homophobia, racism, sexism, and others (Townes 2011, 164-165). Townes also notes that the conversation that womanist seek to convey includes a partnership between men and women, the care and nurture of children, respect for the elderly, a prophetic witness, and a reflection of justice and love for all humanity (Townes 2011, 175). The conversation points to the liberating ministry of Christ.

Jurgen Moltmann expresses that the spirit of life is the Spirit of God. Life happens because of Spirit's work. "The Spirit is more than just one of God's gifts among others; the Holy Spirit is the unrestricted presence of God in which our life wakes up, becomes wholly and entirely living, and is endowed with the energies of life" (Moltmann 1997, 54). Moltmann affirms that the Spirit is unrestricted and contributes to life holistically. In other words, life happens when the Spirit is present. Therefore, even the Church will experience life when the Spirit is activated which brings no restrictions and true liberation can come.

Millard J. Erickson speaks to the theology of the Holy Spirit in powerful ways dealing with the historical implications as well as the practical implications while exposing some of the misunderstanding. He believes that the Holy Spirit is a person not an impersonal force meaning that we can have a relationship with the Holy Spirit as it is with other aspects of the Trinity (Erickson 2013, 784). When we look at the Holy Spirit we must recognize that we can rely on the Spirit for empowerment, the Holy Spirit releases gifts upon believers wisely, as well as gives us understanding. The Holy Spirit also invokes the miraculous to be made known in the life of the believers as well as the Church (Erickson 2013, 803).

Historical Foundation

In this section, the history of the AME Zion Church will be explored. African Methodism was birthed out of oppression and provided a ministry of liberation for African Americans. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was a movement founded in Harlem, New York and James Varick is the noted founder of this movement. The AME Zion Church is a movement that bore fruit for African Methodism and James Varick was seen to be a fruitful leader historically (Walls 1974, 30).

Bishop William Jacob Walls wrote a book called *The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: The Reality of the Black Church* in 1974 and Walls asserts that “Varick led, influenced, and structured the movement that blossomed into the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in America. He believes that Varick’s unwavering leadership through turbulent waters of establishing a new denomination led to his elevation to the bishopric (Walls 1974, 44).

Varick was one of Zion’s first three licensed preachers and was one of the first three people of African descent ordained in the state of New York in 1806 (Walls 1974, 48). After his licensing, Varick led the movement for separation from John Street Church who oppressed African Americans from worshiping with whites and denied ordination to African Americans who acknowledged a call to preach. He also encouraged his followers to build their first church in 1799 (Walls 1974, 88). The movement began with Varick holding separate meetings for African Americans in his home and then began to protest over dissatisfaction with John Street Church.

In the year 1796, when the Colored members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York became increased, and feeling a desire for the privilege of holding meetings of their own, where they might have an opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts among themselves, and thereby be more useful one to the other, a few of the most intelligent of our brethren obtained permission from Bishop Francis Asbury to hold meetings by themselves, in the intervals of the regular preaching hours of our white brethren, in the best manner they could. (Rush 1843, 9)

History records that that there were eight predominantly black classes (small groups) while two of them were all male classes (small groups) who expressed their grievance with how they were treated at John Street Church. This group received permission to hold separate meetings and the movement was officially launched in October 1796 (Walls 1974, 47-48). Varick and the eight classes refused to live and worship according to oppressive standards and ideologies. They decided to experience liberation and freedom so they could express their religious as well as theological freedom which resulted in fruit which included membership, Kingdom characteristics as well as transformative ministry approaches.

History records that the foundation of Zion Methodism was not always easy but Varick stood like a rock amid some raging storms, and brought the old ship of Zion through a series of crisis to freedom (Walls 1974, 42). Varick is seen as a transformative leader. The AME Zion Church was a progressive movement because it sought to create an equitable church environment for black membership to grow in God's graces and discipleship. Varick had a very revolutionary spirit and if he as well as the classes remained under the Methodist Episcopal Church, they would have remained stuck under the status quo rather than a movement providing liberation.

Therefore, a separation was needed for the African American community because the revolutionary spirit expressed informed by the gospel brought relief in lieu of the limitations placed upon blacks in that context. So the AME Zion Church was “A movement providing freedom of self-expression, religious, and social determination” (McKenith 2018, 19). However, even though the movement was to provide freedom, the movement had become exclusive to service only Africans or those of African descent while men were only chosen to be leaders (Moore 1884, 22).

Contemporary Foundation

The contemporary aspect of this project will highlight various leadership models that will assist leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church to become fruitful in their leadership approaches. It will also assess the type of culture that will create an environment for fruitful models to be at work. Transformative leadership is a very important aspect to the growth and survival of the Church.

John Kotter who writes for the business world points out that leadership is different from management but there should be an even balance of leadership and management which positively impacts one’s ability to lead (Kotter 2011, 37). He also speaks of the tension between the two styles working in concert with one another; however Kotter speaks of the power of collaboration because in the church context, leadership and management styles are needed. For example, management involves planning while leadership involves setting a direction. Management also brings about control and problem solving while leadership

brings motivation. Kotter also suggests that “management includes administration and staffing while leadership includes aligning people” (Kotter 2011, 38). Therefore, both styles are needed to produce fruitful leadership in the church context.

Lovett Weems is a leadership expert to the study of Church Leadership in his various books. Weems believes that

Church leadership is never solely about personal authority, a leaders style or a management process but rather about the faithful future of faith traditions and communities. Leadership becomes a channel of God’s grace as we help God’s people discern to what God is calling them and help them take that next faithful step. (Weems 2010, 1)

Leaders within a church context must recognize their responsibility which is to help people discern their purpose and their destiny while giving them that “push” to pursue it through vision.

Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby have created a guide to spiritual leadership and how it has the ability to move people on to God’s agenda. One important way of moving people to what God wants them to do in the earth realm is building effective teams. “Great leaders multiply their efforts by developing teams...this must be one of a leader’s top priorities” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 294). Leaders must develop a dynamic culture because outstanding task cannot be accomplished in isolation. When vision is executed, it is supported and funded by a team who is committed to the work at hand. Blackaby and Blackaby encourages that a mission that brings challenge require a chosen team to ensure that the mission is accomplished (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 296). Teams will

bring much diversity which includes perspective, skills, and knowledge so building an effective team will influence fruitful leadership.

Samuel Chand speaks of how culture influences as well as controls vision which then controls leadership models. Fruitful leadership models will not work unless the culture is prepared to embrace the model. "To create a new culture, you have to destroy the old one" (Chand 2011, 113). This process is challenging because it involves intentional as well as risky processes. It can also be a painful process but is necessary. People are mostly resistant to change when they are used to a certain culture but in order for a Kingdom Culture to come to the forefront which creates an environment for fruitful leadership, the old culture must be destroyed which makes space for a new culture.

Context

The desired survey participants will be both clergy and lay leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. This study will attempt to discover to what extent are leadership models being utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church that produce fruit. The survey participants will be selected from a diverse group of churches with the Mid Atlantic Episcopal area which includes churches from the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia and Tennessee, Maryland, and Delaware as well as churches in Washington, DC Guyana, Barbados and St. Vincent.

The key focus will be aimed at evaluating the process of using various leadership models within the churches to produce fruitful ministry approaches. As

an ordained Elder in the AME Zion Church, I have been a member of the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District for sixteen years as a minister. My experience with many of the churches as it relates to leadership models has been both positive and negative. Observing the impact of leadership and how it influences church growth has led me to pursue this project to determine what models would produce fruitful ministry.

Definition of Terms

Fruit- the evidence of an intimate relationship with Christ and effective ministry practices. It is also the continuous process of discipleship and continuous birthing process for leaders.

Leaders: Ordained clergy and laity who lead churches and various ministries within the AME Zion context.

A.M.E. Zion Church- The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The foundation of this denomination provided a ministry of liberation fighting against the injustices in society.

Mid Atlantic Episcopal District- Congregations and leaders in the Philadelphia and Baltimore, Virginia, East Tennessee and Virginia, Ohio, Allegheny, Guyana, St Vincent, and Barbados Conferences led by Bishop W. Darin Moore, Presiding Prelate.

Kingdom Culture- A culture that enables people to live in peace, meaning, prosperity, rightly connected to God and to one another. A Kingdom Culture is cultivated by having a true understanding of God (Farrelly, 2017, 301). It is also a culture that births fruitful leaders who are controlled by the Spirit.

Oppression- All forms of injustice (racism, sexism, classism, etc.)

Project Goals

It is the purpose of this project to discover to what extent are leadership models that produce fruit being utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The research question is: To what extent are leadership models that produce fruit being utilized within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church? The project goals are:

1. To discover the current leadership models within the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church.
2. To discover the extent of how leadership models influence church growth.
3. To discover the extent to which church leaders allow the Spirit to guide their leadership models.
4. To discover the extent to which church leaders engage in the community as part of their leadership model.
5. To discover the extent of how the current leadership models produce fruitful leaders.
6. To discover the extent to which church leaders mentor the next generation for leadership.
7. To discover leadership styles that contribute to a church growth model.
8. To discover how churches embrace a Kingdom model within their context to cultivate vision.

Design, Procedure, and Assessment

The design of the project will consist of an online survey assessment, and the procedure will be to gather survey data from a minimum of fifty church leaders in the target population area. The focus will be aimed at determining the leaders awareness of various leadership models to produce fruitful ministry approaches. The assessment will include quantitative and qualitative questions which will be developed based on the project goals. The procedure will be to gather survey data from a select group of church leaders in the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

The church leaders will be identified by their appointment of Pastor, Supernumerary Preacher, Conference and District Officer as indicated by Bishop W. Darin Moore within the confines of the Mid Atlantic Episcopal District. The church leaders selected will only be within the targeted population. It is my intention that both clergy and lay will be equally represented. A 5-point Likert scale will be used to measure the degree of effectiveness; ranging from totally agree to totally disagree. There will be one open ended question for each goal.

Personal Goals

Throughout my academic journey, I have always believed that each degree program would contribute to my spiritual formation. God places us in various situations to strengthen our relationship with Him. He also provides opportunities for us to cultivate our purpose. As I am discovering the leadership models that produce fruit for my context, I also want to ensure that I am producing fruit within my personal ministry as a leader. Therefore, I believe that it

is imperative to have these goals in place to grow as a disciple of Christ first, then as a transformative leader in the 21st century.

1. I will become an agent of liberation within my context and abroad through more communal engagement.
2. I will become more intentional embodying Christ by becoming more Kingdom focused by meditating and studying on Jesus' focus on the Kingdom.
3. I will assess and practice how I can become a more fruitful leader by personal reflection and critical thinking.

Field Consultant

My field consultant will be Rev. Nathaniel Cox, Pastor of Trinity AME Zion Church of the Allegheny Conference. His expertise with leadership in African Methodism in the Pittsburgh area will be beneficial to my project.

APPENDIX TWO

Survey

Please provide the following personal information:

Present Age:

- ☐ Less than 20
- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51-60
- ☐ 61-70
- ☐ 71-80
- ☐ More than 80

Gender:

- ☐ M
- ☐ F

Years in your present leadership role:

- ☐ Less than 3
- ☐ 3-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ More than 15

Conference Membership:

- ☐ Allegheny
- ☐ Barbados
- ☐ East-Tennessee & Virginia
- ☐ Guyana-Suriname
- ☐ Ohio
- ☐ Philadelphia & Baltimore
- ☐ Saint Vincent
- ☐ Virginia

Are you actively engaged in the discipleship efforts of your local church?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please circle the number that pertains to your level of agreement on the statement. See scale below.

Likert Scale

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral- I neither Agree or Disagree
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. My current leadership model includes building effective teams. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I have used the leadership model of building effective teams to influence church growth in my congregation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I am open to the Spirit's guidance when I implement my leadership model. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I am engaged in my community to assess the needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The model that I currently use suggests that I understand what it means to be a fruitful leader. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I am open to genuine mentorship for the next generation of leaders. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. My leadership style understands the implications of church growth within my context. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to cultivating vision for the church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. My current leadership model includes a management strategy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. I have found that leadership as a channel of grace is more effective than management for church growth. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please circle the number that pertains to your level of agreement on the statement. See scale below.

Likert Scale

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral- I neither Agree or Disagree
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. I use spiritual discernment when executing my leadership model within my context. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I am engaged in my community as a leader. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. The model that I currently use has been proven effective for leadership development. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. I enjoy mentoring the next generation of leaders. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. My leadership style cultivates church growth within my context. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to leadership for vision of the church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. My current leadership model includes a channel of grace. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. I am intentional to ensure that my leadership model cultivates church growth within my ministry assignment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. I allow the wisdom that comes from the Spirit to guide my approaches to leadership. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. I am engaged in a ministry that is open to moving beyond the walls of the church in response to my leadership model. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please circle the number that pertains to your level of agreement on the statement. See scale below.

Likert Scale

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral- I neither Agree or Disagree
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21. The model that I currently use has produced fruitful leaders in my context. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. I believe in investing in a new generation of leaders through mentorship. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. My leadership style sustains church growth within my context. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. My church embraces a Kingdom model as it relates to the context of the church. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Qualitative- Open Ended Questions

1. List one or two leadership models that you have used within your current ministry assignment.
2. List one or two leadership models that you have used to influence church growth.
3. List the ways in which you have allowed the Spirit to guide your approach to leadership.
4. List one to two ways that you have included community engagement within your leadership model for your ministry.
5. List the ways in which your current leadership has produced fruitful leaders.
6. List the ways in which you are invested in the next generation of leaders.
7. List the ways your leadership styles has both cultivated and sustained church growth.
8. List the ways in which Kingdom models are used within your context to cultivate vision.

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